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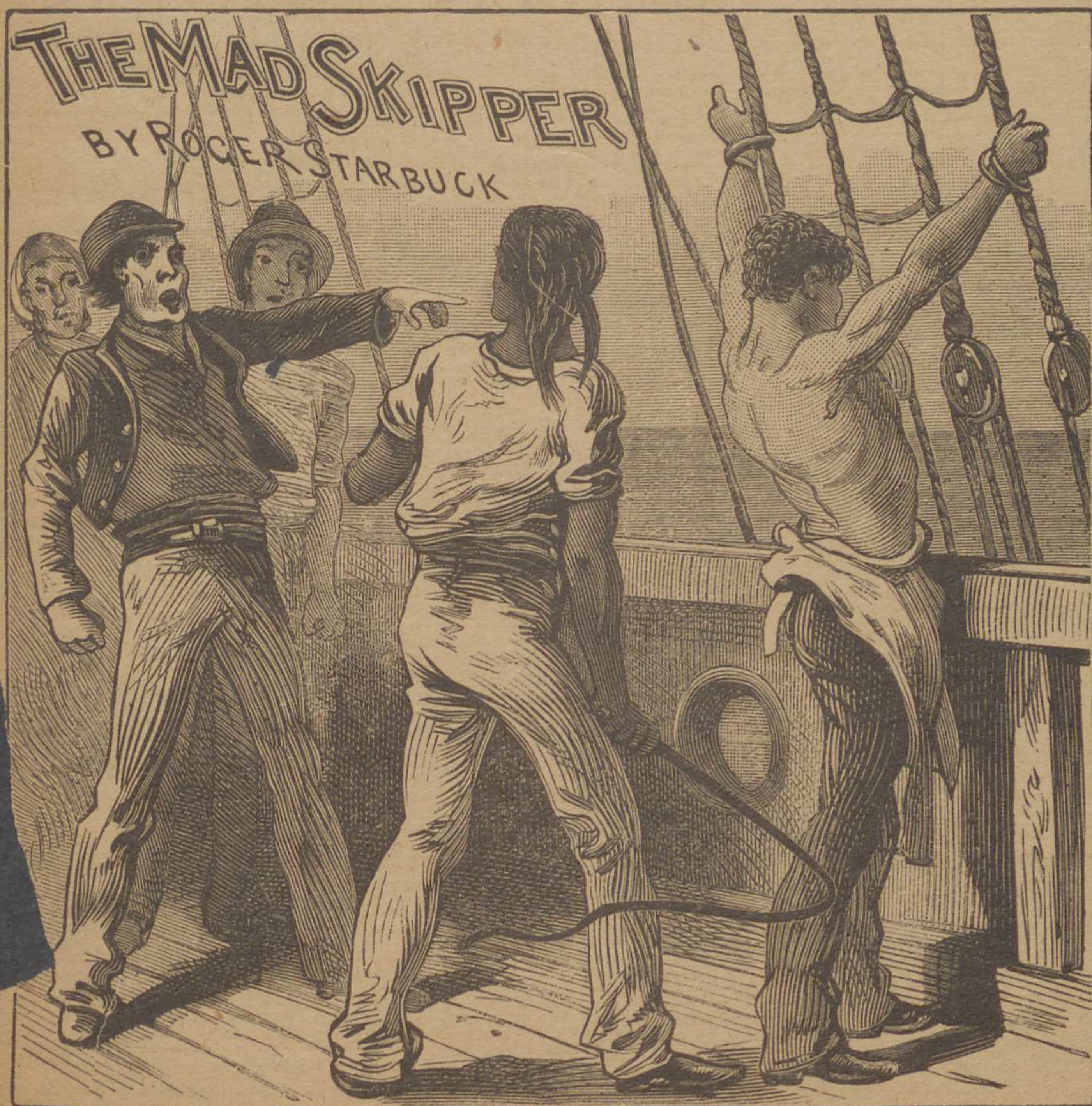
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"HIST, THERE! WHAT ARE YOU ABOUT? WHO GAVE YOU PERMISSION TO FLOG ONE OF MY MEN?
THROW AWAY THAT ROPE BEFORE I TEAR YOU LIMB FROM LIMB!"

The Mad Skipper;

OR,

The Cruise of the Monongahela.

BY ROGER STARBUCK,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY PROSPECTOR," "OREGON JOSH," "KENTUCKY BEN," "THE BOY CORAL-FISHERS," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE DESERTERS.

"SPLASH! splash! splash! Here he comes again—the rain! The calaboose more better than this place. We got no *tabac* to smoke nor nothing to eat. Wish me back again in St. Michael with piece of bread and one little basket of grapes!"

The speaker, an odd-looking Portuguese dwarf with an enormous head, sat by the entrance of a small cave near the summit of a lofty hill overlooking the town and harbor of San Carlos, Chiloe Island. Far beyond the town, which consists of little wooden buildings, few of them more than two stories in height, and irregular streets rudely paved with rough stones, is the short stretch of blue water separating the isle from the mainland (Chili), upon which towered the lofty, snow-covered peaks of the Andes, half-buried in rolling clouds. The glances of the dwarf, however, were turned from these glorious mountains to rest upon the harbor, which at present contained but three vessels—two Peruvian schooners and a large American whale-ship, painted yellow from stem to stern.

"Yees, yees," continued the Portuguese, disconsolately, "everything been eat up dat we had, and me feel hungry; poor Frank Harland hungry, too," he added, glancing toward a manly-looking young sailor who lay, apparently asleep, in a corner of the cave—"he hungry, too, though he sleep so sound."

The large, round, black eyes of the dwarf, and his long face, which was shaped something like that of a horse, softened as he spoke. He took off his jacket, and carefully spread it over the shoulders of his companion to protect him from the drops of water falling from little fissures in the rocky roof.

Frank, however, now sprung up with a gay laugh, and patted the little Portuguese upon the head.

"You *are* a good friend, Joe, although something of a grumbler. Here, take your jacket at once, or you'll catch cold."

"How now? Me think you asleep!" exclaimed the dwarf. "You hear—"

"Everything," interrupted Frank. "You wish yourself back in St. Michael, with a 'piece of bread and a basket of grapes.'"

"Not *me*—not *me* only!" exclaimed Joe, "but both of us. Me no care to be comfortable without you the same; that was what me meant."

"Ay, ay, you're an excellent fellow, Plaush," answered the other. "I wouldn't find fault with you for the world. Let me see," he added, glancing around the cave. "I think I heard you say our 'larder' was empty."

"Yees; eat up last mouthful this morning."

"Not so much as the crumb of a cracker left?"

"Nothing."

"Oh, well, we can get along without dinner for one day, although I must own, friend Plaush, that I feel sorry on your account. You should have remained in the ship. I deserted her because the captain put us boat-steerers on short allowance when there was no occasion for it; but *you*, acting as cabin-boy, were in the midst of plenty and growing fat in the craft."

"Yees, yees, very true. But when you go, me go, too. Me like you very much because you only man me ever see who show himself friend to poor Joe Plaush. Me never forget the time when second mate go to knock me down, and you interfere and prevent him doing so. Me say then, me stick to you; and so me will, unless," he mournfully added, "you get tired of me and wish me to leave you."

"Never!" answered Frank, gazing earnestly upon the drooping face of his chum. "I have taken a great liking to you, and shall never grow tired of such a friend."

"Ah, me glad of that. Yees, yees, very glad!"

And with a happy light shining in his eyes, he pressed a hand of his companion between both his own.

"And now," continued Frank, "it is time we thought of leaving the cave. Our ship sailed yesterday; there is no need of our remaining concealed any longer."

"You mistake. Me been here before, and so know all about the way they do when man desert vessel in this port. The 'vigilantes,' (police officers armed with swords) get description of runaway from the captain, and make search all time till find him. If they not find him until after ship sail, they put him in calaboose all the same as if vessel still here."

"And what sort of a place is the calaboose?"

"An old prison where he put criminals. Suppose we be caught, we have to huddle in with thief, highwayman and murderer, and work with the chain-gang."

"The chain-gang?"

"Yees—de criminals who carry, all day long, great loads of dirt and stones for punishment."

"That would certainly be disagreeable, and in order to avoid such a misfortune, we will wait until night before we quit our retreat."

"Where we go then?"

"We will descend the precipice in front of us, which is washed by the waters of the bay, and swim to that yellow whale-ship, which is not more than half a mile from the shore. My word for it, the crew will not betray us, but will conceal us until the vessel sails."

"Good plan!" cried Joe, clapping his hands. "the precipice isn't very steep, and so we go down easy enough even in the dark."

"Ay, ay, if we are careful. The rock is covered with projections and clambering vines. I'd like something to eat, however, before we start."

The dwarf took off his cap—a large, round one, made of brown cloth, and turned it wrong side out.

"What are you going to do now, Joe?"

"To get something to eat. Turn cap wrong way so as to make look white—lining white. Then go to hut somewhere, and buy cake or cooked potato. Brown cap been described by captain, as belonging to runaway. If made white, this way, won't be known."

"But if you sell your cap—"

"Me no intend to sell. Me buy with money."

And pulling a solitary real from his pocket, he held it up close to the eyes of his friend.

"Been save long time—one year. Glad to spend him now."

"Why have you saved it so long?"

The Portuguese colored, and hesitated a few seconds, before he replied:

"Got little sister in St. Michael. When me going to leave her for whale-ship, she ask me to bring her, when I come home, piece of red ribbon for her hair. So, first time me get money, me put this real in corner of left pocket, so as not to forget to buy with it what she tell me."

"By no means, then, must you spend it now!" cried Frank; "put it back in your pocket!"

"Me get another one, some time," answered Joe, "which'll do just as well."

And before Frank could say another, he quitted the cave.

After a half-hour's absence he returned with his cap full of boiled potatoes, and with several cheese-cakes and rolls protruding from his jacket-pocket.

"Me buy of an old woman living in the valley," he said, as the two partook of their repast. "Got pretty girl there, who play on guitar, and sing with very fine voice."

"How old is she?" inquired Frank.

"About seventeen, and oh, *very* fine girl!" he added, enthusiastically, "brown hair and blue eyes."

"That's an uncommon complexion for a Chiloe maiden, isn't it?"

"Yees, but some time you find all the same. Me see three or four that way in the town when me go ashore here five years ago."

"You are sure the old woman had no suspicions of your being a deserter?"

"Think not, though me *did* notice she looked at me pretty sharp. Young one fixed eye on me too!" added Joe, blushing deeply, while a soft light shone in his round eye.

Frank looked at him steadily. The dwarf, with his short, bandy legs, cowhide shoes, thick little red hands, big head and singular physiognomy, certainly was not calculated to inspire a maiden with the tender passion, and, on that account, his companion hoped he had not fallen in love with the pretty Chiloe.

"Joe, you must forget all about her!"

"Who?" inquired Joe, blushing deeper than before, and yet trying to seem perfectly unconscious.

"The one of whom you are thinking at this moment!"

"Me!" cried the dwarf, "me! Ho! ho! You make fun!"

And a forced laugh crackled in his throat.

"Why don't you eat?" said Frank. "You were complaining of hunger not long since, and now that we have a good meal before us you don't seem to relish it. Try these cheese-cakes—they are delicious."

"Me have eaten three potatoes!" replied Joe, "and them plenty for me now. Me got all the cheese-cakes for you; me no want."

"Nonsense. I won't eat another mouthful unless you join me."

"Hist," whispered the dwarf, as a rustling noise was heard in the grass outside of the cave.

Both men, who were sitting with their backs turned toward the entrance, whirled themselves around, and rose to confront a beautiful vision. It was a young girl, wearing a short cloak and a jaunty little hat. Her brown hair fell over her white neck and graceful shoulders in thick wavy masses. She wore neat little gaiters, and there was such an airy lightness about her symmetrical form that her feet scarcely seemed to touch the ground. The blue eyes were full of spirit and softness, and the perfect regularity of the features was relieved by quick changes of expression and color that gave a piquant charm to the fresh young face. On seeing Frank, she started and seemed a little confused; while the Portuguese, blushing and nodding his head toward her, said to his friend, in a low voice:

"That's *him*—that's the one me been speaking of; the girl me see with the old woman."

The young boat-steerer took off his cap and bowed.

"Beautiful fairy," he began, but she checked him with a peremptory wave of one little hand.

"This is no time for compliments, sir," she said, in a musical but decided voice. "You must leave this place instantly if you do not wish to be arrested. The old woman of whom your friend bought his provision, has gone to betray you?"

"Yees! yees!" cried the dwarf. "Me notice she look sharp at me."

"You were very rash in venturing from your retreat," continued the young girl.

"Ay, ay!" cried Frank. "It was done in opposition to my wishes. A thousand thanks!" he added, his eyes beaming gratitude upon the maiden, "a thousand thanks for your timely warning. Will you permit me to inquire how you knew where to find us?"

"I did not know there were two," she answered, blushing. "I tracked your friend by the impressions of his shoes upon the soft ground."

"You are a noble girl!" cried the young man, impulsively, "and to venture out in the rain alone—"

"Again let me tell you this is no time for compliments!" she interrupted, frowning and smiling at the same time. "If you would escape being quartered in the hateful calaboose, come with me at once!"

"Most willingly will we do that," answered Frank. "But you will get wet through and take cold. Please accept this jacket."

She shook her head and darted off like a fawn, followed by the two seamen.

They soon reached a little wooden building, situated in a deep valley; and having ushered her two companions into a small room in the upper story, the pretty "pilot" shut the door and locked them in.

"Well, Joe," said Frank as the two seated themselves upon a trunk at one side of the apartment, "here we are, both made prisoners by a girl. She is certainly a wonderful creature—so modest and yet so resolute."

"Me think him glorious!" cried Joe, with enthusiasm.

"Unless I am much mistaken, she is a native of the United States, and I am therefore at a loss to account for her being here."

"Yees, yees, you right; him no Chiloe. Him speak too good English for that, and—"

He paused suddenly, as his glances fell upon the head of a skeleton on a shelf opposite to him, while an expression of horror wrinkled his brow. Crossing himself, he shrunk into a corner.

Frank laughed heartily.

"Nonsense, Joe!" he exclaimed. "I see how it is. We are in the room of some medical man. Every doctor has in his study, a skeleton or a skeleton's head."

"Yees, yees, but how you know this doctor's room?"

"By those rows of little vials, together with that mortar and pestle on the same shelf that contains the skeletons, and also by that pile of medical books on the little table in the center of the room."

Joe smiled and clapped his hands.

"Me very foolish to get frightened," he said, returning to the side of his friend. "Me might have known there be nothing to make frightened, where there such pretty girl as him we have seen."

The two were still cowering, when the key was heard turning in the lock of the door; and, the next moment a middle-age man, wearing a dark coat, a broad-brimmed hat and corduroy pants, entered the room. The face of this person was very square, his eyes of a pale-blue color, and his mouth drawn down at the corners. He carefully closed and locked the door after him, then bowing, addressed the two seamen in a voice something like the croaking of a frog.

"Good-morning, friends. My daughter told me everything, and I am glad she acted in the way she did. That calaboose is a miserable hole to be confined in, and we shall do all in our power to keep you out of sight of the vigilantes. The old woman who owns this house, and with whom we board, is an avaricious old wretch who would betray her best friend for a few paltry reals; but we shall baffle her—we shall get the better of her, I hope."

"Thank you," said Frank. Your kindness—"

"Don't mention it," interrupted the other.

"We are always glad to help those who are in trouble, and so are all Christians. We must contrive to smuggle you on board the *Monongahela*—that yellow whale-ship lying in the harbor. She is homeward bound, and will sail on the 23d of May—the day after to-morrow. I have just been to see the captain to engage a passage; for my daughter and I have become tired of this place, and are anxious to return to the United States. Several Spanish doctors have lately come to San Carlos and ruined my business completely. Is your pulse regular?"

"Sir?"

"Your pulse—is it regular, and do you sleep well—and is your appetite good?"

"Oh, yes."

"Are you sure? If not, I have a pill here," and he took a little box from his pocket—"which will regulate everything at once. It is my own invention. I have been four years compounding it to my own satisfaction. It will cure all diseases except consumption."

"A valuable medicine. I shall certainly let you know if I should happen to get unwell."

"How is *your* pulse?" inquired the doctor, turning to the dwarf. "My daughter said she thought you looked ill."

"Him say so?"

"Yes. Ah!" he continued, as the warm blood rushed to the dark face, "your pulse is not right. I perceive you are subject to hot flushes. You must take one of these pills immediately."

"No, thank you; me feel ve y well."

"You are mistaken, my friend," said the doctor, as he felt of the other's wrist. "Your pulse is *not* regular. You will have a fever unless you swallow a pill. Here it is—take it."

The dwarf reluctantly obeyed, declaring that the pill tasted exactly like a crumb of gingerbread.

The night-shadows were creeping into the room when the good-natured doctor quitted it, carefully locking the door after him and putting the key in his pocket. In compliance with his wishes, the two seamen, sitting nearly motionless upon the chest, spoke in whispers when they felt a desire to converse—a precaution necessary to prevent the old woman, who had now returned, from suspecting their presence in the house. They could hear her voice in the room below, and its sharp, impatient tones seemed to proclaim that she had met with some heavy disappointment. Such, indeed, was the fact; for, as the "vigilantes" had not succeeded in finding the deserters, she had not gained the expected reward.

At ten o'clock she retired, in no enviable frame of mind. Turning to his daughter, seated near him in a back room, the physician then screwed his mouth into an expression of comical significance.

"We've got rid of that she-bear at last, Lilian, and I hope she'll soon go to sleep."

"I have no doubt she will," answered the young girl, smiling, "for she drank several cups of the motherwort tea you recommended to her."

"That's good; and now *you* may go to bed. As your chamber is next to hers, you can easily tell by the sound of her breathing when she is asleep. You must then give three distinct raps upon the ceiling. I shall station myself where I can hear them."

"All right, papa!" and she left the room.

Half an hour after, the doctor, hearing the raps, hastened to the apartment in which he had left the seamen.

"The coast is clear," said he. "We will now make our way to the beach."

"You need not trouble yourself to accompany us," said Frank; "we can find our way."

"There is a short cut," replied the other, "which you know nothing of; therefore I must insist upon being your guide."

No further time was lost. They hastened to the room below, the outside door was cautiously opened, and soon after they were hurrying along a narrow path which, the doctor informed them, led to the beach. This they gained in a short time, and found themselves directly opposite the Monongahela, which loomed up like a great phantom about a quarter of a mile from the shore. A new moon, partially obscured by the clouds, which were not yet dissipated, relieved the gloom sufficiently to afford them a good view of the water.

"Here is a skiff," said the friendly guide, pointing to a small boat tied to a stake. "I will go with you to the ship, so as—"

"No, no," interrupted Frank. "We would be apt to be seen from the shore if we took to the boat. My friend and I can easily swim to the vessel."

"Very well. And now, good-by until we meet again, which will be in a few days."

They shook hands, and then, throwing off their shoes, and fastening their jackets to their necks by means of the sleeves, Frank and his faithful chum stepped into the water and struck out for the ship. Being excellent swimmers, they soon gained the bows of the vessel; then, by means of the cable, they clambered to the deck. This had evidently been recently scrubbed; it was as clean as a "milkmaid's apron," and was not disfigured by straggling ends of running rigging, these being neatly coiled upon the belaying-pins. The turns of the cable were nicely arranged about the windlass; not even a kink was out of place, and the two seamen also noticed that the jibs were as carefully and tastefully stowed as those of a man-of-war. The rigging, too, was "taut and trim," the yards squarely balanced, and the sails furled with true nautical precision.

"Me think this very fine ship," remarked Joe. "Captain very particular man. Make crew work plenty, though, me guess."

"Ay, ay," replied Frank, "the captain of this craft evidently likes to have every thing ship-shape."

"Yees. He must be very good skipper."

"P'raps you'll alter your mind when you come to know him, my lad," was uttered in a deep voice, and turning, the two men saw an old, gray-headed tar, looking at them across the windlass.

In a few words, Frank made the necessary explanations, to which the sailor listened in grim silence.

"I'm afraid you've made a bad move in comin' aboard this craft."

"Why so?"

"In the first place, because the officers won't suit you; in the next, because every man of the crew, with the exception of myself and two others, is composed of the most outlandish set of savages your eyes ever lighted on. My only reason for not deserting is because I don't care about losin' my share of the profits which will come from the cargo—this being a full ship. The three mates are New Zealanders, so that all the heathens forward have everything pretty much their own way. The captain seems to have a most unnat'ral liking for these wild islanders, as you may know by his making mates of the three."

"You don't mean to say—"

"Ay, ay," interrupted the old sailor, "it's just what I *do* mean to say. While in the Arctic Ocean we lost over three Nantucket mates, one by falling overboard, another by sickness, and t'other by being struck on the head with a whale's flukes. What does the captain do but put in the places of all of 'em the three boat-steerers of the larboard boats—three big-headed savages!"

"He must have a strange taste," said Frank.

"Strange! That doesn't express it, mate," replied the other. "P'raps you'll think him *more* than strange when you get acquainted with him. Hows'ever," he added, "if you are willing to take up your quarters in this craft, I ain't the man to go back on you. But you'd better keep yourselves close until the craft sails, for if those heathens got sight of you they wouldn't hesitate to betray you to the vigilantes, for they are a treacherous set."

"Do they try to quarrel all time with you white men?" inquired Joe.

"Well, no, I can't say that they quarrel with us, though there's a good deal of fighting and scratching of faces a-going on among themselves. What I complain of is the noise they make, keeping me from sleeping when it is my watch below, and shirking duty whenever the captain's eye isn't upon 'em; besides which, they can't talk like rational beings on any subject, which is very disagreeable when we have to huddle all together in a small fore-castle."

"It can't last for a long time, at any rate," said Frank, "the craft being homeward bound. I guess we'll take up our quarters here."

"Just as you like, mate," replied the old tar. "It sartainly pleases *me* to have another civilized being added to the few in the ship. The captain, I'm certain, will be glad to have two more in the craft, seeing as we are a little 'short-handed.'"

He pulled away one of the fore-hatches, and pointing significantly into the hold, continued:

"I'll find you a good hiding-place, my lads, if you'll jump between decks. We must be quick about it, too, as I expect my relief to come up every minute."

The two men sprang into the hold, followed by the old sailor, who soon conducted them to a little cell or chamber formed by an open space beneath a great pile of whalebone slabs in one corner. As this could only be reached by climbing over the top of the pile and descending on the other side, and as their guide declared that it was only known to himself, he alone having been employed in piling up the slabs, our two friends were much pleased with their temporary retreat.

"And now," said the old tar, "I have to caution you about speaking loud, seeing as the bulk-head is only a few feet from you, and your voice might reach them quick-eared heathens in the fore-castle. The ship sails day after to-morrow, and until then you must make yourselves as comfortable as you can in this narrow hole, and with the provision which I shall lower to you."

"Many thanks, my friend," said Frank. "We shall never forget your kindness."

"It isn't worth mentioning," replied the other.

JNA

"Ben Williams is always ready to help a ship mate, and the man who isn't is worse than a shark."

So saying, he crawled out of the opening and left the hold, to return a few minutes after with a small package of provisions and a keg of water, which he lowered from the top of the whalebone pile to the two men below. With a hearty good-night he then ascended to the deck and cautiously closed the hatch.

CHAPTER II.

A STRANGE CAPTAIN.

ON the morning of the 23d, a whaleboat was sent ashore from the Monongahela for the two passengers, the doctor and his daughter Lilian, who stood upon the landing, ready to embark.

"Why, papa," whispered the young girl, uneasily, as the boat glided alongside the little wharf, "these men are all savages!"

The doctor smiled.

"All the crew, with the exception of the captain, two white men, and the cook, are New-Zealanders," he replied. "It is not uncommon to find whaleships thus manned, owing to the desertion of so many of the original crews. A vessel of this kind seldom brings home the same men who went out in her."

"I don't like the appearance of these creatures," continued Lilian; "they look so fierce. I am really afraid of them, although," she quickly added, "I may be very foolish to feel so. They are not to blame for being so ugly."

The doctor seized her wrist.

"Your pulse is not quite regular," said he; "you are a little nervous. You had better take one of my pills."

"Oh, no, you are quite mistaken, papa, if you think I am unwell."

Before her father could reply, the officer of the boat, a tall, wild-eyed native, with wrinkled brows and long, crooked teeth, sprung ashore, and bowing, abruptly addressed the doctor:

"If you Doctor Claret and dis your daughter, you best get into de boat fast as you can."

"These are to go with us," said Claret, pointing to a couple of trunks; "and—oh, no, my good man," he interrupted, as the savage moved quickly toward the baggage, "you can do nothing with them alone. You will have to get some of the men to assist you. I was obliged to hire seven Chilians to bring them here."

"Chilian lazy dog," grunted the New-Zealander, as he coolly shouldered one of the trunks and passed it to the men in the boat; "dis no much heavy."

"There's muscle for you!" cried the doctor, turning to Lilian; "the result of constant exercise in the open air. Nevertheless, I have even known men of this stamp to be sorely afflicted with divers complaints of the bones, such as rheumatism, and such like. My friend," he added, confronting the native, as he prepared to shoulder the other trunk, "how is your pulse?"

"What say?" inquired the officer, looking much puzzled.

"Is your pulse regular?"

"Me no understand!" cried the savage, impatiently. "No care stop to talk for nothing."

Getting up anchor: must hurry aboard. Think more of dat dan pulse, as you call him." And picking up the trunk he deposited it in the boat.

"Not very polite, certainly," remarked the doctor. "I know by the wild, restless gleaming of his eyes that he needs something to soothe him. One of my pills would have that effect."

"Hey, dere!" shouted the islander, as he took his place in the stern-sheets, "you want to be leave ashore, eh? Come quickee, get into de boat."

The doctor sprung into the bow, and carefully helped his daughter to the after-thwart, which was prepared for her accommodation.

"Now then, you can start as soon as you like," he exclaimed; and seizing his steering-oar, the dusky officer quickly whirled the boat's head around.

"Hi, hi! now den! spring, my men!" he shouted; "don't let grass grow on boat!"

"Hi, hi, hi!" shrieked the dark crew in response, and the ashen blades whirled through the water.

The boat was soon alongside of the ship, and Lilian was assisted to the deck by the first officer, a gigantic New-Zealander, wearing great brass rings in his ears.

"Where is the captain?" inquired Doctor Claret, as the trunks were being hoisted from the boat.

"By windlass, watching men heaving at the brakes," answered the mate. "Me go and bring aft here in a minute."

Lilian glanced forward, and her cheek paled a little as she encountered the wild eyes of more than twenty fierce-looking islanders who were heaving in the slack of the cable. Some of them wore thick rolls of white cotton cloth twisted about their brows in the form of a turban, others were bareheaded, and all were stripped nearly to the waist, as if they took pride in displaying the hideous tattoo marks with which their skin was discolored. Suddenly one of them started a shrill, barbarous chant, and the rest soon broke forth in chorus, their voices being so harsh and discordant that Lilian felt tempted to press her hands to her ears.

"Papa, I'm afraid we've got into a curious ship," she murmured, nestling close to the doctor's side. "I see no white men at all."

"Beggin' your pardon," said a voice behind them, "I'm white, and there's two others of the same color below, a-looking for handspikes."

Claret and his daughter turned to behold a tall, thin seaman, with a remarkably small waist, a long face, and red, fiery eyes.

"Tim Collins, at your service," he continued, with a low bow. "I'm the steward, and beg leave to inform this young lady that she needn't go to be frightened, as them Kanakas is all perfectly harmless. As to us whites, our color is a sufficient recommendation, with the exception of one, and that one is me, who is subject to certain fits, at certain times, of breaking up things—a general 'smashing-up fit,' which makes it necessary to tie me up to prevent my doing mischief."

"That is singular enough," said Claret. "I don't remember ever hearing of such a case before. Your nerves, probably, have been injured

in some way. Permit me to offer you one of my pills."

"They would do me no good," answered Collins. "The fit of which I speak is constitutional—inherited from my mother."

"Indeed? It must give you a great deal of trouble."

"So it does. I always tell my captain of my infirmity before I ship, hows'ever, and also inform him that I'm perfectly willing to be tied up whenever it comes upon me. So you see it's at his option whether to take me or not."

The skipper was now seen approaching, and Collins hastened into the cabin.

"Good-morning, Captain Wythe," said the doctor, extending his hand to the master of the vessel. "I perceive we are aboard in time."

"Ay, ay," replied the skipper, bowing and lifting his cap to Lilian; "in good time. A few more heaves there at the brakes will raise the anchor. Precious freight," he added, nodding his head toward the young girl.

Claret introduced them, and Lilian thought the captain one of the most singular-looking beings she had ever seen.

Rather above than below the middling height, his form was wasted almost to the proportions of a skeleton, while his arms were so long that they extended below his knees. His face was thin and haggard; the skin of the hue of parchment, and the forehead disfigured by two scars of a dark purple color, intersecting each other in such a way as to resemble a cross. His brows, shaggy and crooked, projected far over his eyes, the pupils of which were surrounded by circles of a greenish hue; and there was a wild, wandering expression in these sunken orbs which seemed to betoken a mind ill at ease. His dress, different from that of most whaling captains, consisted of a round, curious-looking canvas cap, a short Spanish cloak, gray pants, and long, pointed shoes.

"You were never before on board a whale-ship, Miss Claret?"

"No; and I am surprised at the—"

"Scarcity of white men here, you would say," sharply and rudely interrupted the skipper; "but I can assure you that Kanakas make as good sailors as the whites do. My thirty years' experience at sea has convinced me of that."

"Really," cried the doctor, "I am quite surprised to hear you say so. I perceive," he added, glancing aloft, "that some of your islanders are already loosening the topsails."

"Ay, ay; we'll soon get under way. We have a fine breeze for leaving the harbor. Ho there, steward! this way!" he shouted, as Collins suddenly thrust his head through the companionway.

The steward advanced, and the captain ordered him to get some of the men to help carry the passengers' trunks below.

"I wonder if *they'll ever come up again!*" he added, in a hollow voice.

"I don't understand you," said Claret.

"Ay, ay, that's the way of the world. Nobody understands me!" muttered the strange captain, grinding his teeth. "Round and round all the time; that's the way it goes, roaring, surging, and crashing; taking in everything that comes near it!"

A lurid light burned in his deep-set eyes; he rubbed his thin hands together, and paced the deck with quick, nervous strides.

"Incomprehensible!" whispered Claret to his daughter. "What *can* he mean?"

"I'm sure I don't know, papa," replied the astonished girl; "he talked rationally at first."

The doctor pulled his pill-box from his pocket, and advanced to the captain's side.

"Excuse me," he said, putting his hand upon the other's shoulder, "but I think you are laboring under some nervous derangement of the mental—"

"What!" interrupted Wythe, with startling vehemence, turning his glaring eyes full upon the doctor's face—"What! Do you mean to insult me?"

"I am a physician," answered Claret, drawing himself up with professional pride, "and as such have a right to make suggestions to my patients. These pills," he continued, taking a couple from the box, "you will find immensely beneficial in your case."

"I am not one of your patients, sir, and want nothing to do with your pills, so you may as well put them back in your pocket. But hark, ye, doctor," he quickly added, the lurid light again burning in his green eyes, "what is your opinion of whirlpools?"

"Sir?"

"Whirlpools! *Whirlpools!*" hissed the captain, through his set teeth.

"They are very dangerous, I believe," replied the doctor, much surprised at the question. "I never saw one, however, in my life."

"Ay, ay. Dangerous—what of that?" muttered Wythe, turning abruptly upon his heel. "I care nothing for the danger."

"Papa," whispered Lilian, "how strangely he acts? We have certainly got into a curious ship. Perhaps we had better go ashore again."

"Oh no, we must not think of doing that. This strange captain is a 'valuable case' for me to study, by doing which, I may benefit the whole profession. I think, but am not as yet quite positive, that he is laboring under some mental derangement caused by a bad state of the nerves; the result of overeating and neglect of proper exercise. But hark," he added, hearing the rippling of the water about the vessel's bows, "we are under way."

"Why, so we are," cried Lilian, and she ran to the lee rail to watch the receding shore.

Topsails and topgallants having been sheeted and hoisted, the vessel was now running along before a moderate breeze at the rate of four knots. An islander stood at the wheel; the rest of the men were occupied in catting and fishing the anchor, and in dragging the cable amidships with their chain-hooks. Thus employed, they did not notice a sail-boat containing four men, two of whom were pulling with might and main toward the ship, and the others shouting and gesticulating vehemently to attract the attention of those on board. Lilian, who had perceived the little vessel the moment she glanced over the rail, now pointed it out to her father, remarking that she believed two of its occupants were vigilantes.

The doctor pulled a small spy-glass from his

pocket, and after a hasty survey declared she was right.

"I hope none of the officers will see them," he whispered, "for it's easy enough to guess who they are after. Do you understand me?"

"Oh yes," answered Lilian, slightly blushing. "I remember you told me this morning that those two deserters had concealed themselves in the ship."

"I hope they are in a good hiding-place," said the doctor. "The mate will probably see the boat in a minute, and wait for it, and the poor fellows will certainly be ferreted out if they are not careful."

"That would be too bad," said Lilian, earnestly. "I hope the officers won't get sight of the boat."

She looked much disappointed, the next moment, in seeing the dusky mate spring to the waist rail and gaze at the approaching boat. Nor could she suppress a cry of vexation when she heard him order his men to haul back the main-yard.

"What's that for?" yelled the captain from the quarter-deck.

"Boat want to come aboard," responded the islander—"boat with two vigilantes in him."

The captain looked surprised and impatient, and watched the boat with a lowering countenance until it glided alongside.

"What do you want?" he roughly inquired, as the two vigilantes sprung to the deck with rattling scabbards. "Come, I have no time to lose! Speak quickly, and tell me your errand."

This the two men explained in broken English.

"Well," replied the captain, "if you suspect there are deserters stowed away in my ship, you are welcome to search for them provided you don't take more than fifteen minutes to do so."

"Si, si, senor," answered one of the men; "we think we can find them in that time if they be here. We will search the fore-castle first."

"Very well, be as lively as you can," said the captain; and turning upon his heel, he resumed his walk while the two vigilantes, moving forward, descended into the fore-castle. Drawing their swords, so as to be prepared for resistance, they peered into the bunks, overturning the bed-clothes therein, and thrust the points of their weapons into obscure corners; when, finding their search unsuccessful, they proceeded to the fore-hold. Here empty barrels and casks were overturned, coils of rigging thrust aside, and great bunches of oakum pulled asunder, after which the pile of whalebone slabs was scrutinized with suspicious glances.

"Perhaps open space behind where man could hide!" said one of the vigilantes, addressing the second mate, who had accompanied them into the hold. "Perhaps man get there by climbing over the top."

"No t'ink so," answered the dusky officer, "but look dere if you like. Got two minutes more to look."

Accordingly, one of the men clambered to the top of the pile; but before he could lower himself on the other side, the stern voice of the captain was heard at the hatchway.

"Amoki,"—this was the name of the second

mate—"tell those two men to come up and leave the ship at once. D'ye hear there?"

"Ay, ay," replied the other, and with an agile spring, he gained the top of the whalebone slabs, and caught the policeman by his cloak.

"Come—no look any more; time up; must leave de ship!"

"In few minutes; tell the captain to wait few minutes."

"Not one second!" screamed the New Zealander. "No want in ship any longer."

The man, however, quickly jerked his cloak from the other's grasp, and dropping to the deck, immediately discovered, at the bottom of the pile, the opening from which protruded the heads of the two deserters.

"Ho! ho! here—this way!—here they—"

The hand of the New-Zealander, tightly pressing his windpipe, prevented the conclusion of the sentence.

"When me tell you leave the ship," cried the savage, fiercely, "me like you do so. If not me kill quick!"

The vise-like grasp upon his throat deprived the Chilian of all power of resistance. His sword dropped from his hand; his eyes and tongue protruded; his face began to grow purple; it was evident that the enraged savage intended to choke him to death. In fact, he would have accomplished his purpose, but for the interference of Frank Harland, who now sprung to his feet, and seizing the mate by the shoulders, pulled him backward with a force that caused him to let go his hold.

"You carry matters too far, my friend," said the young man. "You must not commit murder."

"Hi! hi! who dis? What dis mean?" exclaimed the astonished savage, staring upon the two deserters. "Where you come? No like you meddle with me."

"I couldn't stand by and see you kill the man," answered Frank; "but I can assure you that I had no objection to your other movements. I may add that I am glad to perceive that our Chilian friend is not disposed to stay any longer in our company."

"He! he! he!" laughed little Joe Plaush—"there he go, scrambling over top of bone-pile as if dogs after him."

In fact, the policeman did not stop until he had gained the deck, where he found his comrade, who had been considerably alarmed by his protracted absence.

"Now, then!" cried the captain, who stood near the foremast, "you will be good enough to leave my ship. The quicker the better!"

"Si, senor," replied the discomfited policeman, "if you please make deserters come up from below."

"Deserters!"

"Yes, below there in hold." And in a few words he related his adventure.

"Captain," said old Ben Williams, who, being at work near the foremast, had overheard every word that was said—"Captain, I think the man is mistaken. About half an hour ago I heard them two little savages, the cabin-boy and his chum, say they were a-going into the fore-hold to pick oakum, so I haven't any doubt it was them that was seen by this chap."

"Ay, ay, that clears up the matter," cried Wythe; "so away you go," he added, turning to the vigilante. "You perceive there was a mistake made."

"No, no, it was not an islander—me quite sure of that, though the hold was a little dark, and—"

"Nonsense!" shouted the skipper, impatiently. "You are a stupid blunderer! Do you suppose I shall allow you to carry off two of my own men?"

"But, senor—"

"Not another word! Time enough has been lost already. Your deserters are not in the ship."

"You mistake, senor, the—"

"Blast your eyes!" thundered the skipper, stamping furiously upon the deck, "I tell you I have no time to bandy useless words with you. There are no deserters in the craft. Away with them into the boat!" he added, turning to his crew.

This command was promptly obeyed. The vigilantes were seized and bundled unceremoniously into the boat. The warp was then cut, and the ship's main-yard braced forward, much to the satisfaction of old Ben Williams, who grinned with delight as he saw the boat dropping astern.

A few minutes after, however, Amoki emerged from the fore-hold, and hastening to the quarter-deck, related to the captain his discovery of the two deserters.

"You must be mistaken."

"No; tell you me speak to 'em; one American and one Portuguese."

The skipper hastened to the hatchway and summoned the two men on deck.

"What ship did you belong to?" he inquired.

"The whaler Marmion, of New Bedford," answered Frank, "which sailed a few days ago."

The captain glanced over the rail at the vigilantes' boat, which was now fully fifty fathoms distant, careering swiftly toward the landing-place.

"Shall we signal boat, and wait for him to come aboard?" inquired the mate.

"No; we have lost too much time already. Besides, being 'short-handed,' I have no objection to the services of these two men. Ben Williams!"

"Ay, ay, sir," cried the old tar, looking very guilty as he advanced.

"You knew the two men in the hold were not the cabin-boy and his friend. You knew they were these two deserters, did you not?"

"Seeing as no harm can come to 'em now, I may as well own up that I did," answered Ben.

"Well, see that you never deceive me in that way again," cried the skipper. "As you have got me two extra hands, however, I'll forgive you this time. So that ends the matter."

"Shall we get up stu'n'-sails?" inquired the first officer.

Wythe did not answer. His eyes, lighted by the lurid gleam, were fixed upon space, as if his mind had suddenly wandered from the subject of conversation.

The New-Zealander repeated his question, and then, starting quickly, like one suddenly waking from a bad dream, the captain clutched the arm

of the savage, and pointing aloft, replied, in a voice that rung like a thunderbolt through every part of the ship:

"Studding-sails and royals! Ay, ay! crack it on the old craft—everything she can carry! and when you *hear it roar*, let me know!"

"Me no understand. What roar?" timidly and respectfully inquired the dusky mate.

"Roar—I said *roar*, fool!" shouted the captain, while flakes of foam flew from his white lips. "You shall know in time what I mean! Up with studding-sails and royals there! Let me hear the groaning of the timbers—the cracking of the masts—the booming of our broad bows! Ho! ho! there, bestir yourselves, all hands! We have no time to lose! Round and round it goes, roaring, crashing, and thundering like an avalanche! Steady at the helm!"

While some of the men were engaged in sheeting home royals and preparing studding-sails, Frank and the old tar, Ben Williams, darted aloft to rig out the main-topmast studding-sail boom. They were soon on the yard, and, while shoving out the boom, the young man touched his companion on the shoulder.

"What is it, lad?"

"Your captain is a strange man."

"So I told you from the first."

"Ay, ay; but don't you think his mind is a little deranged?"

"Well, sometimes I've thought so, and then again I've altered my determination. He talks sensibly enough as a general thing; but, may I be blasted if I can make out what he means when he gets on that topic about 'the going round and round,' and that infarnal 'roaring.' He always had a wild way with him, but it's only since he was taken with brain fever—which happened about two months before we made the port of San Carlos—that he got upon this 'round, roaring' way of speechifying, which is sartainly very peculiar and mystifying. It even puzzles Tom Collins, who is very sensible-like, excepting when he gets into one of his smashing-up fits."

"Into *what*?"

"A smashing-up fit. If you have a nice pipe, mate, or anything of value that can be broken, I'd advise you to keep it out of Tom's sight, for he'll sartainly smash it if it happens to be near him when the fit comes on. He can't help it, hows'ever, seeing as it's 'constitutionality.'"

"He must be a singular chap."

"Not a bit of it, excepting when the fit comes; but, if we happen to see him in time, we can tell by sartain signs when *that's* a-coming on, and prevent his doing execution by tyin' him up, to which he never objects."

Frank was about to reply, when he heard behind him the "frog-like" voice of Dr. Claret.

"Young man, allow me to congratulate you upon your escape."

Much surprised, both seamen turned, to behold the doctor clinging to the yard with both hands, his brown coat-tails flapping about in the wind.

"You perceive that I am quite a sailor, having ascended thus far without assistance," cried the man of medicine, smiling. "The fact is, I have felt like exercising all the morning. There is nothing like exercise to strengthen and invig-

orate the constitution. It was partly on that account, and partly for the purpose of congratulating you, that I came up here."

"My dear sir," said Frank, smiling, "I thank you very much; but as you are not used to being aloft, you had better go below as quick as you can. A roll of the ship might throw you off."

"I should certainly be glad to take your advice if I could," answered the doctor, now hugging the yard with both arms; "but having got thus far, I can neither go any further, nor can I return."

"Why, my eyes!" cried Ben Williams, "it's as simple as the tying of a square knot. The slightest bit of a sheer to larboard will carry you into the rigging."

"Unfortunately," replied Claret, "I now feel the inevitable consequences of exercising on an empty stomach. My legs and arms are shaking so that I am totally unable to perform the 'sheer' to which you so kindly allude." The old tar turned aside his head to conceal a broad grin; while Frank, gently grasping the doctor's arm, soon contrived to get him into the rigging.

With great trepidation, Claret then descended to the deck, where he encountered his daughter, who threw her arms impulsively around his neck.

"Oh, papa! I was so frightened. How could you venture so far aloft? I expected every moment to see you fall to the deck, you trembled so while clinging to that boom!"

"Oh, so you have been watching me," said Claret, looking much confused. "I left you in the cabin, and had no idea you would come up before I returned to the deck. Is it possible you could see me tremble while so far from me?"

"Yes, you shook like an aspen, papa, and you would certainly have fallen had you been left to yourself."

"Ahem—well—yes, I *did* tremble a little on account of exercising on an empty stomach; but as to falling, I hardly think that *could* have happened, as I was perfectly self-possessed. I may add," continued the doctor, drawing himself up, "that 'our profession' are remarkable for having their wits about them under every circumstance."

"Breakfast!" shouted Tom Collins, at this juncture, thrusting his long face through the companionway.

The captain, however, who stood leaning against the weather-rail with downcast eyes and knitted brow, paid no attention to the announcement; perceiving which, the steward repeated the word in a louder voice. Still the moody skipper said nothing. Doctor Claret fidgeted and looked impatient.

"Really, Lilian," said he, "I have quite an appetite, and I am sorry that this strange captain is so indifferent to the word 'breakfast.' I must rouse him from his trance."

As he moved toward the skipper, however, Tom Collins interposed:

"Hist! my dear sir! You mustn't intrude upon him when he's 'wrapped up in his reverie.' He gave orders to me—to all of us, in fact—never to do so."

"But, the breakfast—the breakfast, my friend! It will get cold,"

"Oh, no," answered Collins, "there's not the slightest need of your waiting for the captain. You may go below at once, if you have no objection to eating with a New-Zealander!"

"Not the least," answered Claret, "provided he's civil."

"Ay, ay, he's civil enough, Onoolo is; always minds his own business. I'll summon him at once. The captain ordered me, t'other day, never to wait breakfast for him when he's in his reverie. Breakfast ready, sir!" he added, turning to the mate, who at that moment came aft.

"Ay, ay," answered the savage, showing his hooked teeth, and shaking the rings in his ears. "Ay, ay, very well, dat." And he plunged through the companionway with a suddenness that made the doctor stare.

"Now then, come on, please!" cried Collins, bowing three times to Claret and his daughter, as he backed on "tiptoe" into the companionway. "Come on."

Accordingly, the doctor took his daughter's arm, and conducted her to the state-room, in which they found the New-Zealander already seated at the table, desperately attacking a pyramid of biscuits, fresh pork, fried potatoes, etc., etc., which he had piled upon his plate. The truth of the steward's statement, that Onoolo minded his own business, was not to be disputed; for he paid not the slightest heed either to the doctor or Lilian, but, handling his knife and fork in a manner peculiar to the people of his race when provided with such instruments, he thrust his food into his mouth and chewed it with astonishing rapidity.

Collins, however, still moving upon the tips of his toes, politely motioned the two passengers to their places, and put the edibles in the position most convenient for them to reach.

"Sorry the captain's in his reverie," said he, "for I know he'd be glad to do the honors of the table."

"Never mind," replied the doctor, "we shall get along very well."

They—that is to say, Claret and his daughter—had nearly finished their meal, when they saw the steward make a violent pass with his clenched fist, as if striking at some "invisible" antagonist, while his whole face wrinkled with the most singular contortions. One corner of his mouth was twisted toward his left ear; his nose and his brows were moved rapidly; he winked with both eyes!

"Good heavens!" cried Claret, "what is the matter, my friend?"

"Nothing, only it's a-coming on!" exclaimed Collins, with a strong nasal twang, at the same time jerking both elbows violently, "it's a-coming on, my smashing-up fit—and I'd thank somebody to tie me up at once! Come, Onoolo—quick!"

The New-Zealander, however, having just made an attack upon an enormous chunk of salt beef, continued to eat voraciously, paying no attention to the summons.

"It's a-coming on!" continued Collins, dancing around the state-room, "there'll be ruin here directly if I ain't tied up!"

"Tie up, when get through eat—not before," grunted the mate, with his mouth full,

"That will probably be too late," said Claret, jumping from his chair. "However, I have something here,"—pulling the pill-box from his pocket—"which, I doubt not, will prove more beneficial even than tying him up!"

So saying, he advanced toward Collins with a pill held between his thumb and forefinger; but the steward gliding past him, declared it was no use; and snatching an empty platter from the table, he dashed it upon the floor, shivering it to atoms. Seizing a coffee-cup, he destroyed that in the same manner, and would probably have demolished every article of crockery upon the table, had not the doctor seized him from behind with both arms.

He struggled violently to get away, but the other having the advantage of position, contrived to maintain his hold, and soon, with a deep gasp, Collins declared that it was over.

"Pray, my friend, how often do these fits come on?" inquired Claret, releasing him.

"About once a fortnight," replied Collins. "Don't be frightened, miss," he added, glancing toward Lilian, who looked much alarmed, "it's all over now, and mighty sorry am I that it took place in your presence. I hope you'll forgive me, and—"

"Meat! meat! bring more meat!" interrupted Onoolo, rapping the table violently with the handle of his fork. "Not half enough yet."

"Ay, ay!" cried the steward, and he darted into an adjoining apartment to procure more beef.

"My friend," said Claret, directing an anxious glance toward the New-Zealander, "I beg leave to remark that you will ruin your digestive organs by eating so much."

"Who you speak?" cried the mate, with an angry frown. "Mind own business; dat way gentleman do. You no pay for meat; captain pay for him. No like you speak to me in dat way."

"I mean no offense," replied the doctor. "If you choose to make yourself sick I have no more to say. Come, Lilian, let us go on deck."

They quitted the cabin, and moving to the weather-rail, stood watching the receding shores of Chiloe and the mainland, now dimly visible off the weather-quarter. The captain, with the moody, absent expression still upon his brow—his arms folded and his eyes fixed upon the deck, leaned against the mizzen-mast, as motionless as a statue.

CHAPTER III.

A QUARREL.

WITH studding-sails rigged fore and aft, the Monongahela was now running along at the rate of eight knots, playfully tossing the water from her bows, and gently swaying from side to side, as if nodding to the shadows of her yards and sails upon the water.

Forward, all hands, with the exception of Frank and Ben Williams, who were still at work aloft, had gathered about the windlass and fore-hatch, to await the coming of Moonshine, the negro cook, with the breakfast-kid, which, on the present occasion, was to contain a certain savory mess, called "scouse,"—a favorite dish with seafaring men—consisting of salt meat and sea-biscuits, which are first chop-

ped up, then soaked, and afterward carefully boiled.

To see the eager, wistful expression of the dusky faces turned toward the galley, from which the fragrance of the scouse was gently wafted with every puff of steam gushing from the entrance, a novice would certainly have believed that roasted turkey, plum pudding, or turtle soup was expected.

The tall islanders, provided with cups and pans, which they kept striking together, creating a din like that of kettle-drums, became more impatient every moment, and finally uttered sundry yells and screeches, which had the effect of drawing the cook from the galley.

"Almos' done!" he shouted. "Bring de scouse along in one minute, supposin' you hab proper patience. World wasn't made in a second, no more dan white man, New-Zealander nor nigger was. Hab patience, gen'lemen!"

And with a broad grin, revealing two rows of shining ivory, he dodged back into the galley.

Meanwhile little Plaush moved briskly among the group of dusky giants, exerting himself to strike up a bargain with his jack-knife for a pan and two spoons, that he might procure a share of the scouse for himself and his absent chum. Each of the islanders, however, being provided with but one pan, the efforts of the dwarf were unsuccessful, and mournfully pocketing his knife, he fell into a deep reverie as to the means of securing a share of breakfast for his friend.

Suddenly he bethought him of the steward, and he was on the point of moving aft, to request that worthy to provide him with the articles needed, when he saw Moonshine, the cook, emerge from the galley, with the kid in his arms.

Fearing that, during his absence, the hungry islander would devour every mouthful of the breakfast, he resolved to postpone his errand until assured that enough of the scouse was left for the two men aloft. Accordingly, when the cook placed the wooden vessel upon the hatch, he (the dwarf) bounded toward it like an india-rubber ball, determined to protect a small portion of it from the ravages of his dusky shipmates. Yelling and screaming like tigers, the latter rushed upon the well-filled kid, dashing their great spoons into its contents, and filling their pans with wonderful rapidity. In fact, the whole of the savory mess would have disappeared in less than a minute, had not the watchful Portuguese suddenly snatched the kid from the fore-hatch and ran with it toward the waist.

At first, as if utterly dumfounded by the audacity of this pigmy among them, the tall islanders glared with protruding eyeballs at the queer little man, as he receded from them with the kid in his arms; but, soon recovering themselves, they bounded after him, shouting and screeching like demons. The dwarf hurried on, however, and rushing into the galley, closed and fastened the door after him, much to the astonishment of the cook, who had just returned to his little palace.

"Hallo! What brought you here, breakin' into honest men's lodges? What you want? Why have you fastened dis door? Go for'ard,

where you belong. Foremast hand not fit to 'sociate wid higher class, like me! I's de cook; don't ye know dat?"

Bang! bang! crash! at the galley door.

"Hey! hey, dere! What all dis mean? I call upon capen to protec' me from dis outrage. I's a gen'leman ob leisure, I is! Get away from dat door! Can't t'ink what it all mean!"

In a few words Joe made the necessary explanations, to which Moonshine listened with eyes expressive of the utmost astonishment.

"Possible? Am it possible so much fuss made 'bout little grub? Hey, dere!" he added, addressing the islanders outside, who were still shouting, screeching, and "banging" at the door—"stop dat racket! I'll make ebery t'ing right in one minute!"

And drawing from his locker a large panful of scouse, which he had evidently saved for his own breakfast, he passed it through a little opening in one side of the galley, to those without.

"Dere!" he exclaimed, as one of them snatched it from his hand, "hope dat will satisfy you. True gen'lemen are liberal, which am not expected in dis case. Now go 'way and leabe me alone!"

The New-Zealanders withdrew, and Joe was on the point of opening the door to quit the galley, when Moonshine laid his hand upon his shoulder.

"You mus' not go yet," said he. "Wait until dem fellers hab filled deir stomachs, when dey will be in a more better humor. If you go now dey will tear you to pieces. I know 'em."

"Me ain't afraid of that," replied Joe. "If they come at me, me can run down into the cabin."

"Bery well; if you choose to take de 'sponsibility upon your own shoulders, why, do so—dat's all; but remember, I's warned you."

"Me think it's most time for Frank and Ben to come down from aloft," replied Joe, "and me like to be on hand to give 'em the scouse."

So saying he opened the door, and, leaving the galley, cautiously crawled to the carpenter's bench, upon which he deposited his kid, and then sat down, being screened from the observation of the islanders by the works. Glancing aft, he perceived that the quarter-deck was deserted, the captain, his second and third officers and two passengers having gone below, and the mate not having yet finished his breakfast.

He was overjoyed, however on looking aloft, to see Frank and Ben Williams descending the main rigging. They sprung to the deck, soon after, and in a few words he related to them what had happened.

"You are a good, faithful friend, Joe," cried Frank, grasping his hand; "but you must never again get yourself into trouble on my account."

"Nor on mine," said Ben. "Them heathens won't ever forget what happened, and will have a grudge against you from this day. However, there's three of us now, without counting the steward and captain. We can't do much against so many, it's true, but if each of us keeps his weather-eye open, we can be prepared at any rate. By the way," he continued, "you needn't have borrowed trouble about such a small mat-

ter as a pan and spoons, as I have several in my chest. I'll go and get 'em at once."

He did so, and the three, seated upon the carpenter's bench, were soon enjoying their meal.

When it was finished, they walked forward, and taking seats upon the windlass, commenced to smoke, Ben having furnished pipes and tobacco. The New-Zealanders, who were now reclining about the deck, enjoying their wooden "meerschams," did not seem to notice the dwarf, but old Ben, who watched them keenly thought he could detect an angry flash in their downcast eyes whenever the Portuguese spoke.

"They ain't forgotten what's happened, depend upon it," he said, in a whisper to Frank, "and unless I am much mistaken, they'll show their spite against our little friend here before long."

"They shall not harm a hair of his head," returned Frank, "as long as I have power to defend him. If we only had arms—a pistol or two, for instance—"

"I have an old shot-gun in my chest," interrupted Ben, "together with a little ammunition. I will go below at once and get it ready; for it'll come in use in a short time, unless I'm much mistaker."

He had scarcely quitted the deck, when several of the islanders arose, and moving to the weather-rail, seemed to hold a whispered consultation, now and then directing a side glance toward the two men seated upon the windlass. They were soon joined by others, when their conversation became more animated. Ominous screeches and angry exclamations followed; the glances darted toward the deserters were now more fierce and frequent than before; it was quite evident that some scheme of revenge against the dwarf was being planned.

"There is a handspike and a crowbar, Joe, on the deck behind us," whispered Frank. "The moment those fellows come toward us, we must pick them up, then jump behind the windlass and stand with our backs to the knightheads! Do you understand?"

"Yees! yees! but you better go below and leave poor Joe to take care of himself. Me can run up the rigging."

"Nonsense; they would follow you."

"Me look out they not catch me. No use your getting yourself into trouble on account of little chap like me."

"Hist! Do you suppose I'd forsake you? you, who have done so much for me? If you hint at such a thing again I shall feel offended."

As he spoke, the sight of a large hand-saw which an islander had procured from the captain's chest, and was bringing forward, cleared up his doubts as to the nature of the punishment meditated against his friend. At the period of which we write, the practice of "cobbing," as it is termed by seafaring men, was quite common aboard merchant and whaling vessels; that is to say, the luckless wight who gave offense to his shipmates, was at once thrown across the windlass, face downward, and held in that uncomfortable position while some one of the crew inflicted blow after blow upon his back with the flat part of a hand-saw.

Frank determined that his chum should endure

no such insult at the hands of the savages; in fact, Joe himself declared he would sooner die than suffer the outrage. In order, however, not to get his friend into trouble on his account, he sprung toward the rigging, intending to run aloft. To his surprise and disappointment, he had no sooner grasped the shrouds than he beheld the tall form of a New-Zealander, who had stealthily mounted to the top on the windward side, descending toward him! There being no other alternative now, he bounded over the windlass, and picking up the handspike, took his place by the side of Frank, who, crowbar in hand stood with his back to the knightheads.

The islanders glared at the two men a few seconds; then approaching, one of their number ordered the dwarf to step back again to the other side of the windlass.

"Yees! yees! you want to strike me with the saw! Me sooner die than be lick in that way!"

"Own fault; take away scouse kid!"

"Me have right to do so; you would eat up all the breakfast so me two friends have none."

"Fr ends no here to breakfast, must have none. Dat's right."

"No, it's not right."

"T'ink oderways you t'ink. *Must 'cob' you,*"

"Kill me first!"

"Hi! hi! kill quick if no 'cob.'

And picking up crowbars and handspikes, the savages were on the point of leaping over the windlass, when they were checked by the stern voice of Ben Williams.

"Hold! the first one that jumps is a dead lubber!"

Turning, they saw the old sailor armed with his shot-gun, the muzzle pointed toward them.

They exchanged glances and looked irresolute; but soon a peculiar gleam flashed from their eyes. They had seen the islander aloft glide stealthily but quickly down one of the backstays and leap behind the try-works. Soon he reappeared, creeping like a cat around the angle of the brick-work—no doubt intending to spring upon the old sailor from behind. The windlass, together with the group of savages standing in front of it, screened him from the gaze of the two men by the knightheads.

"You'd better put down your handspikes and crowbars!" continued Ben. "I'd rather not shoot you if it can be helped."

"If do so," said one of the New-Zealanders, in order to gain time—"if do so you must put away gun."

"Sartainly; that's square enough."

"No t'ink you keep word."

"Never broke it in my life. Down with them weapons, and down goes my gun; that is, provided you promise also not to meddle with Frank and the Portuguese, hereafter."

"No like make promise."

"Ay, ay, but you must if you want to put an end to our present bearings ag'in' each other."

"Well, put down gun first."

"Not a bit of it, seeing as you are the attackers."

"Then not put down handspikes and crowbars."

"If you don't I shall—"

Before he could say another word, he was pulled to the deck by the strong arm of the savage

behind; and the next moment the gun was jerked from his grasp by one of the natives in front. With fierce yells, the whole band then crowded around him. His hands and feet were tied, and then the man who got possession of the gun lifted the weapon to strike him upon the head. He was prevented from doing so, however, by Frank, who with his chum had quitted the knightheads the moment he saw the old tar thrown down. A blow from his handspike stunned the savage so that he staggered to one side; and the young man had seized the gun to snatch it from the other's relaxing grasp, when he was violently hurled upon his back by two of the savages. They bound his feet with strong cords; then one of them pressed his hand upon his throat and his knee upon his breast, while the other tied his arms. By his side lay the dwarf, secured in a similar manner.

"Hi! hi!" gritted one of the New-Zealanders, stooping and peering triumphantly into Frank's face. "Make you all same unless keep still and no struggle."

"You are a set of cowardly dogs," gasped the prostrate man, "and—"

The tightening of the hand upon his throat prevented the conclusion of the sentence. His brain grew dizzy; he was unable to breathe; sharp, agonizing pains shot through his head. He struggled violently to release himself, but in vain; and there is no doubt the savage would have accomplished his intention of choking him to death, but for the interference of Onoolo, who having finished his breakfast, had just emerged from the companionway.

"Hi! hi! dere!" exclaimed this worthy, rushing forward, "what you 'bout dere! Stop! stop dat work at once!"

He pushed aside an islander who was beating Ben upon the head with his fists, and ordered the one who was strangling Frank to let go his hold.

"What all dis mean?" he angrily inquired, as the savages released the prostrate men. "Speak quick—I like to know!"

Before they could reply, the captain, who had come on deck soon after Onoolo, darted into the midst of the group, his eyes rolling in his head, his whole face convulsed with frantic rage.

"Go below, you miserable dogs!" he shrieked, glancing round upon the islanders. "Go below before I tear you limb from limb! Oh! you black-skinned villains! ye miserable curs; do you dare to make a disturbance aboard my ship? Go below, I tell ye—every man of you!"

The men did not move; they glanced at the dusky mate as if waiting for *him* to sanction the captain's order.

"Blast ye, why don't you obey?" roared the skipper, picking up a handspike. "Jump! jump, I tell ye!"

"Capen!" said Onoolo, "dey no like to be call names; s'pose you speak to 'em like gentleman dey go."

"A gentleman! Who do you suppose could speak to rascals of their color like a gentleman or—"

"Remember, I of de same color," interrupted the mate, his eyes flashing angrily. "S'pose you call dem dogs you call me dog too!"

"Ay, ay, *you* and every other native is but

little better than a dog—I repeat it!” yelled the captain, stamping the deck in his rage. “But!” he suddenly added, while a strange, restless, unmeaning glance shot from his eyes, “what difference does it make, since we’ll all go down together! Ho! ho! ho!—We’ll soon hear the roaring and see the whirling of the mad waters as they go round and round! Royals, studding-sails, every thing she can carry—crack ’em on the old ship! A merry, merry time of it we’ll have going down among the sea-demons!”

He pressed his hands to his brow, and glowering at the savages, broke into a fit of wild, unearthly laughter, that rung through every corner of the ship.

“Hi! hi!” exclaimed Onoolo, the angry expression in his eyes giving place to one of mingled veneration and awe. “Me half t’ink so, before, but certain now. ‘Hooki-nu,’ (a spirit of the air) speak to this man. He see what goin’ to happen *before* happen. Mus’ do eberything he tell us.”

A low murmur circulated among the dusky group. They huddled closely together with bowed heads, and eyes expressing admiration and wonder; for, like the American savages, many of the islanders of the Pacific respect the madman as a being endowed with supernatural wisdom.

Meanwhile, peal after peal of maniac laughter continued to break from the captain’s lips, until, as if suddenly waking from some fearful dream, he started, glared around him in a bewildered manner, and then, turning upon his heel, darted aft, and rushed into the cabin.

“Go below,” whispered Onoolo to his dusky shipmates. “He tell go below. Mus’ do eberything he say. Fas’en scuttle after you get on steps.”

The men obeyed, after which the mate severed the cords about the feet and wrists of the three men.

“I have not yet squared accounts with the rascal who pounded me while I was down!” cried Ben, springing to his feet.

“Nor I with the one who tried to choke me!” exclaimed Frank. “Nor yet with the villain who struck down my poor little chum.”

“Some odder time,” said the mate; “when go ashore guess hab chance to fight out. Bes’ let alone, now. Men all below and scuttle fastened.”

“Ay, ay,” cried Ben. “We’ll wait until we can face ’em on equal tarms, and then, blast me, if we don’t make ’em dance.”

“Might be so, and might not. Any rate, must not fight aboard ship. You three white men mus’ live in steerage rest of time; den no chance for quarrel.”

CHAPTER IV.

OFF THE CAPE.

WAVED by a fair wind, the Monongahela, in due course of time, passed the Isle of Desolation, and drew near the stormy latitudes of the Cape. The weather seemed to grow colder every hour; the sun, obscured by leaden-colored clouds, seldom smiled upon the lone ship, and the spray of the upheaving seas were often frozen to ice upon the shrouds. Perched upon the curling crests of the waves, large flocks of albatrosses were now

frequently seen, watching with kingly majesty the great yellow hull of the vessel as it boomed along with creaking masts and yards. There is something singularly grand and imposing in the appearance of these enormous white birds, with their proudly arched necks and calm, piercing eyes. When caught, as they often are, by means of a hook and line, and transferred to a ship’s deck, from which they are unable to rise by their own efforts, they show no signs of fear or trepidation, but with an air of dignified contempt, unflinchingly return the gaze of their captors.

Perhaps the crew of the Monongahela might have amused themselves, occasionally, by catching one or two of the feathered monsters, had not the boisterous state of the weather, and the drenching seas breaking over the forward rails, prompted every man—when on deck and not occupied in working the ship—to seek the shelter of the round-house. Here, the islanders would form a group by themselves on one side of the wheel, while Ben Williams, Frank Harland and Joe Plaush took a position on the other.

Notwithstanding the orders of the mate, they would doubtless have sought and found an opportunity to “thrash” a few of their late antagonists, had not the fair Lilian, who had heard an account of the affray, previously described, persuaded them to “keep the peace,” while aboard the ship.

“The New-Zealanders outnumber you two to one,” she had said, “and if you succeed in punishing those who were immediately concerned in assaulting you, you will certainly be murdered afterward, by the rest. They may, in fact, extend their revenge so far as to murder every white man in the ship—my father and all.”

Stationed under the round-house, as mentioned, the three friends would often hear, on stormy nights, the sweet voice of the young girl rising from the cabin, while she sung and played on her guitar, the airs that her father loved. There was something singularly bewitching in this music heard in conjunction with the howling of the wind in the rigging and the crashing of the seas as they broke over the vessel. Frank would listen like one entranced, the eyes of the old tar would sparkle with delight, while Portuguese Joe—poor little dwarf—crouched up in a little ball on the deck, would grasp the bars over the cabin windows and peer into the stateroom at the fair singer, until his head swam and his strained eyes grew dim.

He could never hope to win the love of this beautiful being; but he could watch her ever-changing countenance, and daguerreotype its varied expressions upon his heart, to be treasured long after she should have passed forever from his sight; he could listen to her voice, and long after it should have died upon his ear, could hear its melody in his own soul.

It was a voice which, on some occasions, even had the power to smooth the wrinkles upon the moody brow of the captain, who seemed to grow more strange and absent-minded every day. In fact, the command of the ship now rested principally with Onoolo, the chief mate, who, having followed a seafaring life almost from his childhood, was an excellent sailor; and yet, so great

was his respect for the madman, that he would have obeyed, without hesitation, any order from the same, how fatal soever might have been its consequences. Luckily, for all concerned, he had not thus far been called upon to do so; but trimming the sails with true nautical readiness to meet every variation of the weather, he kept the vessel well up to her course. Thus it happened that the ship, one afternoon, nodded with her tall masts a salute to the dreary heights of Staten Land off Cape Horn. Partially veiled by a shroud of dun-colored clouds, the snow-covered peaks of the island were visible about a league to the windward; also the rocks below, covered with myriads of seals, the continual howling of which, mingling dismally with the roaring of the surf, was borne to the ears of the crew. A moderate gale was blowing; but as it threatened to increase before night, Onoolo had put the ship under close-reefed topsails and a fore-topmast staysail, keeping her full and by, on an easterly course—the wind being about three points abreast the starboard bow.

Portuguese Joe was at the helm, oftener, it must be acknowledged, glancing at Lilian—who with her father stood near the weather-rail—than at the compass or the ship's head. The eyes of the little man sparkled like diamonds; his cheeks were flushed; his whole frame trembled. The presence of the young girl always affected him in this way; but now, in the midst of his joy, feelings of poignant anguish stabbed his heart like a knife whenever Lilian, turning, glanced over his head at the restless wake of the ship behind him.

Ay, ay, he was so short that *she* could look straight over his head; and it was this that galled him, that made him almost rail at fortune for bringing him into the world. Had it blessed him with the average height of man, *she* would not thus have overlooked him; his eye would occasionally have met hers, and he might have *hoped*!

"Steady, dere—where going to?" yelled the mate, as, while indulging these reflections, Joe allowed the vessel to fall off her course two-thirds of a point. "Mind what you about!"

"Ay, ay," answered the dwarf, and at the same moment everything seemed to grow dark around him, for Lilian had just descended into the cabin. Soon, however, he heard the music of her voice and guitar, and glancing through the cabin windows, he saw the fair girl seated upon a sofa in the state-room, by her father's side. Not long was he thus entertained; for the violence of the gale suddenly increasing, the din of wind and ocean drowned the music of the instrument and the tones of the singer. The clouds, lowering in dark volumes above the tall masts, added to the gathering shadows of night, which were only partially relieved by the phosphor-gleam of the waves. Tearing through the wild waters as if maddened by the lash of the tempest, the vessel was deluged fore and aft by the heavy seas now almost continually breaking over her. Occasionally, uplifted by some tremendous wave, she would rise with every timber groaning and straining, and then plunging downward with a side lurch, would bury bows and windlass in the roaring, seething waters.

"Clew up fore and mizzen topsails! Lively

dere, lively!" yelled the mate, as the sharp "snapping" of the jib-boom was suddenly heard. "Get in dem sails quick as can!"

This was soon done, after which the watch, with the exception of Ben Williams and Frank Harland, who stationed themselves in the fore-top to keep a lookout, were allowed to return to the shelter of the round-house.

The two seamen aloft were obliged to cling firmly to the shrouds to prevent themselves from being thrown from the top, owing to the violent rolling and plunging of the vessel.

"It's a-blowing pretty hard," remarked Ben, as the foremast, suddenly jerking, sent forth a dismal, warning creak; "but I think the craft will stand it, seeing as she's gone through everything thus far."

"Ay, ay, I hope so," answered Frank.

"It wouldn't matter much," continued Ben, "the perishin' of such an old hulk as I am, but that gal in the cabin is too lovely to go to Davy Jones."

"You are right. She is a noble creature."

"So she is. It was only t'other night that she came up from the cabin and slipped a big chunk of gingerbread into my hand, while I was at the wheel. 'Here, Ben,' says she, 'is something to help you pass away the time. I saved it for you instead of eating it myself, as I am not very fond of this kind of cake.'

"'Why, bless your eyes, miss,' says I, 'you'd better keep it for yourself, seeing as the cabin larder isn't overstocked, and, not wishin' to contradict you, I never knowed a lass yet that wasn't fond of gingerbread.'

"She put the cake into my hand, hows'ever, and tripped away laughing, and—Halloo! who's this?" he interrupted, as the head of a man suddenly rose to view above the edge of the top.

"Ay, ay!" cried a shrill voice—"who's this? Ho! ho! ho! Two lookouts in the top! Good-night to you, my brave Norwegians—good-night!"

"It is the captain," whispered Ben; "his mad fit is upon him."

As he spoke, Wythe swung himself into the top, and holding to the shrouds with one hand, peered into the faces of the two men—his green eyes blazing with a strange light.

"How far off is the coast?" he suddenly inquired—"the coast of Norway?"

"Sir?"

"The coast of Norway I said!" yelled the captain, shaking his clinched fist in Ben's face.

"Why don't you answer?"

"It's a long distance from here," answered Ben, much surprised by the question.

"Ho! ho! but we'll soon be there with this wind, won't we?"

"Perhaps so," replied the old sailor, thinking it best to humor him.

"I know it!" shrieked the captain, tossing his arms wildly about his head; "and then we'll hear it roar!"

"Hear what roar?"

"Ha! ha! my man, you shall know in time! Round and round it goes, roaring, tumbling and gurgling, just like the water ahead of us; and it'll take us down, down, down—further down than we ever were before!"

At this moment the ship, lurching sideways as it was tossed upward by a tremendous sea, caused the three masts to quiver and snap as if they were about to go by the board, and the captain would certainly have been hurled from his position by the fearful "plunge" that followed, had not Frank thrown an arm about his waist. Writhing in his grasp, however, even while the ship writhed in the grasp of the gurgling, bursting avalanche of waters now pouring over her decks, the mad skipper shrieked and gibbered like a drowning hyena.

"You had better go into the cabin!" shouted Frank. "You will find it more comfortable there than here."

"Furies, man—a thousand furies! Who talks to me of the cabin now? Down! down! in the fathomless depths, there's a cabin big enough for us all! Ho! ho! how fast the whirlpool draws us down!"

"For God's sake," cried Ben, as peal after peal of strange laughter now burst from the foaming lips of the skipper, "for God's sake, try to calm yourself. It's awful to hear you a-going on in this way."

"Ay, ay!" shouted the captain, his whole demeanor suddenly changing. "How is this? What have I been saying?"

And clapping a hand to his brow, he glanced around him in a bewildered manner.

"You have been ravin', sir, I fear—talkin' about whirlpools, and all that sort of a thing."

"Ay, whirlpools! My brain is a whirlpool, old Ben. How are we heading?"

"To the east'ard, as well as we can."

"It will be a long time before we get there!"

"Where? You mean New London, I suppose."

"Blast ye, who said New London?"

"Beggin' your pardon, sir, I thought that was what you meant. His mind is sartainly crazed now," he added in a whisper to Frank; "it's a gone case—poor captain!"

"Hark ye, old man!" cried the skipper, laying his hand upon Ben's shoulder, "I think I once heard ye say something about having cruised off the coast of Norway."

"You are right, sir."

"Ho! ho! then you must have seen it!"

"What?"

"The *maelstrom*, fool!—the great *maelstrom*!"

"We wasn't near enough to the coast for that."

"But ye heard it roar!—tell me that ye heard it roar!" thundered the captain, his eyes flashing wildly.

"No, sir; we—"

"You lie! you lie! You must have heard it! You *did* hear it! Round and round it goes, crashing, bursting, and bubbling, with the noise of a hundred thunderbolts! Ho! ho! a grand ruin it makes of all who come near it, carrying them down, down, down, forevermore!"

And with a wild laugh, he suddenly broke from Frank's grasp, and rapidly descending the rigging, made his way to his berth.

"How wild, how strange he looked," remarked Lilian, who, still seated in the state-room with her father, had noticed the captain's haggard face as he rushed past them; "he is certainly mad!"

"His mind is deranged," replied the doctor,

"but you need not feel at all frightened on that account, for I understand that Onoolo is an excellent seaman, and perfectly capable of taking care of the ship."

"Our poor captain should be watched narrowly," said Lilian, "or he may take a notion, some time, to jump overboard."

"True enough. And I now remember to have noticed a life-buoy lashed to the after part of the round-house. As soon as the gale abates, I shall go on deck and make an examination of the article, to make sure that it is perfectly safe and sound. If it is not, I shall suggest to Onoolo the propriety of having a better one made."

"Why, papa, I was not aware that you knew enough about life-preservers to—"

"You are mistaken," he interrupted. "Almost from my boyhood I have turned my attention to the study of preserving human life; not only with medicine in cases of sickness, but with other agents where medicine would prove of no avail. Having studied the art of swimming in books which in connection with this subject, also treat of life-preservers, etc., I deem myself a tolerably good judge of the articles in question."

"And yet, papa, I believe you do not know how to swim."

"Well, yes—ahem; it is true I never *practiced* swimming, but I understand the *theory* so well that if I should ever get beyond my depth, I should be able to keep myself afloat by a very simple process; that is, by turning myself with ready self-possession upon my back, carefully keeping my hands down with the palms extended toward the bottom of the water, and expanding my lungs with deep inspirations of air."

"But perhaps you would not have sufficient presence of mind to—"

"Nonsense, my child," interrupted Claret, "it is in just such emergencies that the medical man shows the most coolness and self-possession."

And in order to prove this he proceeded to relate a number of little anecdotes of his own experience, to which the young girl, with martyr-like patience, listened without once interrupting him. When he concluded she retired to her berth; and the gale having by this time considerably abated, the doctor rose, refreshed himself with an unusually long and deep draught from a suspicious black bottle taken from his trunk, and then made his way to the deck for the purpose of examining the life-buoy. Clambering rather awkwardly upon the round-house, he loosened the long rope to which the buoy was attached, and was on the point of dragging the instrument to the deck, so as to scrutinize it by the light of the lantern hung up in the mizzen rigging, when a sudden heavy roll of the ship caused him to lose his balance and fall with the buoy into a large mincing-tub lashed to the quarter-deck and filled with salt water. Considerably affected by the liquor which he had taken, and his eyes being partially covered by a sort of nightcap worn upon his head to protect him from the cold, the doctor believed he had fallen overboard; and so, clutching the friendly life-preserver, he shouted and yelled like a madman, in the hope of making himself heard. But no answer was returned, and he suddenly remembered that the after part of the ship, when he came on deck to make his investigation, was

deserted by all hands of the watch, with the exception of the man at the wheel, who had gone forward to shake a reef out of the fore-topsail.

This thought made the blood run cold in his veins. He reflected that, even should he succeed in clinging to the buoy for a few hours, his legs must freeze in the mean time. In fact, he believed his doom was sealed.

"Help! help! Oh, dear me, is there no hope?" he gasped, kicking his legs violently, to prevent them from getting cramped. "Ahoo! Ahoo, there!"

But the roaring of the winds and waves was the only response.

"I will not despair," gasped the doctor; "no, no—our profession should *never* despair! If Providence, however, in whom I place my trust, cannot help me out of this terrible situation, I—I—ahem—I will give up my chances like a man; I will go from this world like a true martyr, although," and here he kicked his legs frantically, "it is hard to die in the prime of life!"

His foot struck the side of the tub, but believing this to be the submerged portion of the buoy, the doctor was still far from guessing his real situation.

"This is terrible—terrible!" he gasped. "I see not a vestige of hope! Adrift upon the wide ocean, with the ship receding further and further from me every moment, I am doomed to a fearful death!"

"Halloo, there! Why, my eyes! What's this?" shouted the deep voice of Ben Williams, within a foot of his nose. "What are you doing here, doctor?"

Much astonished and overjoyed, the doctor no longer hesitated to lift one hand from the buoy to push aside the nightcap that obscured his eyes, expecting to behold one of the ship's boats alongside of him. At this moment, however, Ben pulled him from the tub and set him upon his feet on the deck.

Completely sobered, Claret now glanced around him in a bewildered manner, until the whole truth suddenly flashed upon his mind; while the watch, who had by this time come aft, crowding around him, stared alternately at his saturated garments and at the life-buoy floating in the tub.

"Ahem—gentlemen," stammered the doctor, in answer to his questioners, directing at the same time a severe glance at the helmsman, who was laughing heartily; "gentlemen, I have been experimenting with your life-buoy, which I am happy to inform you is a good one."

"Why, beggin' your pardon, sir," cried Ben, "that buoy is a condemned one, which we wouldn't use under any consideration. It's been condemned a long time—has only been left where you found it because it's more out of the way there than it would be anywhere else. Tim Collins broke it with an ax, months ago, durin' one of his smashin' up fits."

"Oh, well—ahem!—I could not see where it was broken, on account of the darkness. In fact, I believe it would have been better to have waited until daylight before making my experiment."

So saying, the doctor hurried into the cabin to change his saturated garments for dry ones.

while old Ben turned to Frank with a puzzled grin rippling his tough features.

"I've heard of them that l'arns navigation with a tub, but I never heard of 'em carryin' the matter so far as to experimentalize in it with life-buoys."

"Take buoy and put back where come from," ordered the mate. "Strange man, dis doctor: make pill and swim in a tub."

By the time the buoy was lashed, Claret, in his little room below, had made the necessary change in his dress.

"It is lucky Lilian knows nothing of what has happened," he muttered. "Otherwise she would worry herself to death in the fear of my taking cold. Fortunately," he continued, drawing the brandy-flask from his chest, "I have something here which I think will prevent my suffering the evil consequences usually resulting from a too sudden immersion in cold water. I shall indulge in a few drinks, and also warm myself thoroughly by the cabin stove before going to bed."

So saying, he rolled up the legs of his trousers, revealing tightly-fitting drawers of red flannel; then, putting on a common-looking nightcap of blue cloth, he seated himself by the warm stove in the state-room.

"This is comfort—ahem!—comfort indeed, after floundering about in that disagreeable tub. Strange that I should have imagined I had fallen overboard," he continued, holding up the flask and eying it affectionately; "it makes me shudder to think of it." And he swallowed several mouthfuls of the brandy.

"This is prime!" he continued, smacking his lips. "Ah—ahoo! good liquor as a medicine is—"

He paused on hearing footsteps behind him, and turning, saw Tom Collins.

"Halloa! So you are up yet?" cried the steward.

"Yes, warming myself just previous to going to bed."

"I thought I'd come here to see how the fire is," said Collins. "It's mighty hard, it is, my having to get up out of my warm bed in the steerage in the middle of the night to see about the fire. But I *have* to do it; it's the captain's orders."

"Here is something to warm you up inside," said the doctor, kindly presenting the flask.

"I'm temperance," said Collins. "Hows'ever, I won't refuse to oblige you, seeing it's in the way of medicine." And he took a long pull at the flask.

"The liquor in there is the best as was ever drunk," he said, as he returned the bottle; "just mind how it sparkles, will you?"

The doctor held up the flask, and examined it narrowly.

"Ahem! My friend, there is no sparkle to it now, as it is all gone. The bottle is empty."

"Is it possible?"

"Yes; but never mind. I have plenty more of the same sort in my chest."

"Which, beggin' your pardon, if I may make a suggestion, had better be procured at once while I brighten up the fire."

"Ahem—very good." And going to the chest, the doctor took out a second bottle.

"You seem pretty well provided, sir," remarked the steward.

"Well, yes. It is the duty of our profession to carry plenty of medicine with them when it is convenient."

"As in the present case," said Collins, bowing. "I honor the profession."

"Thank you—ahem! Will you take some more?"

"Repeating, as I said before, that I'm temperance, but bringin' in medicine as a qualifier, I will!"

He took a deep draught, and returned the flask to the doctor, with a curious, one-sided bow. Claret put the bottle by the side of the stove, resolving to warm his ankles thoroughly before drinking again.

"Ah—ahoo! it is a cold night," he remarked.

"Very," answered Collins. "In fact, *particularly* so."

As he spoke, he struck fiercely at the empty air with his clinched fist.

"Ah!" ejaculated Claret.

"Ah!" returned the steward; and suddenly picking up the bottle, he poured every drop of its contents down his throat.

"Rascal!" cried the doctor in a rage, "who gave you permission to do that?"

"It's a-comin' on, sir; 'my smashing-up fit; and I thought best to empty the bottle before breaking it! Tie me up—hold me—or something. There'll be ruin if you don't!"

He danced about the cabin like a madman, dashed the empty bottle into fragments, and pulling the doctor's night-cap from his head, trampled it under foot. Then he rushed on deck, and picking up a handspike, proceeded to smash the belaying-pins in the weather-quarter rail.

"Hey, dere!" shouted Onoolo, turning to the watch under the round-house, "tie dat feller up! quick—he got he fit again!"

Several of the men rushed toward the steward, who had now got astraddle of the rail; but before they could reach him, the ship lurching violently, as a swell struck her under the lee counter, threw him overboard. The main-yard was instantly hauled aback, and a boat lowered, and manned by a good crew, among whom were Frank Harland, Ben Williams and Portuguese Joe.

The moon, which was now gleaming coldly down from an opening in a mass of dark, ragged looking clouds, lighted the careening waves with a strange, spectral gleam, revealing, for an instant, the ghastly face of the steward, as, with wild shrieks, he tossed his arms upward from the crest of a towering sea. The creaking yards of the ship, as her great yellow hull rolled to and fro, seemed to mock the cries of the unfortunate man.

"Spring! spring!" shouted the second mate, who commanded the boat. "Spring quick; strong as never spring before, and we get dat man safe and sound."

As he spoke the boat was tossed high up on the summit of a huge billow, and the dusky officer, bending forward, peered eagerly ahead and listened. He could now see nothing of Collins, but an ominous gurgling shriek, faintly audible above the roar and clash of the career-

ing waves, broke upon his ear. With loud cries and frantic gesticulations, he encouraged the men at the oars, until the boat was many fathoms from the ship, when he ordered them to stop pulling. "Peaking" their oars, the men then rose to their feet and glanced round them in all directions; but no sign of their shipmate could be seen, nor were his cries any longer to be heard.

"He is a gone case," said Ben Williams. "Poor Tom! he had some good qualities; in fact, he'd have been a good shipmate in every respect, hadn't it been for his smashin'-up fits, which, however, warn't his fault. Well, well, he's now where he'll never break any more belayin'-pins."

"Dat so," answered the second mate, "and me t'ink it now time to get back."

Since they stopped pulling, the men had not once looked toward their ship; and in doing so now, they were surprised to see the vessel rolling along upon her course, receding further and further from them every moment. At first, they could scarcely believe their own senses, and each looked at the other as if hoping to read some evidence of his being deceived. Every face, however, expressed consternation and unbounded astonishment; every lip was dumb. There was no mistake as to the course of the ship; she was steering due east, and must soon vanish from the sight of the boat's crew.

Frank was the first to break the silence:

"This is very strange!" he exclaimed, "but we must not lose time. We must take to our oars, and keep the craft in sight as long as we can. Perhaps she will be hove to for us shortly, and we will get an explanation of this strange proceeding when we get on board."

"I don't see what 'explanatory' can be made!" cried Ben; "if we were on a lee shore, now, I could understand the matter, but blast me if I can, under present circumstances. P'r'aps, hows'ever, as you say, our best plan is to pull ahead, which we can do easy enough, seeing as we have the wind in our favor."

"Ay, ay, pull ahead," ordered the second mate; and seizing their oars, the crew were soon urging the light vessel through the water, with long, powerful strokes.

Now and then, as they tugged and strained, they threw glances over their shoulders, in the hope of catching a view of the ship; but they were disappointed every time; and as the movement of turning the head very far around while pulling at a heavy oar, is somewhat painful, they soon stopped it, studying the countenance of the second mate, which was a faithful barometer of the state of affairs. Its gloomy, downcast expression, not once relieved by a hopeful gleam, plainly told them that the ship had not yet hove to; and as their situation, with the water up to their ankles—for it was breaking over both gunwales—and with their arms aching from their long-continued exertions, was very uncomfortable, old Ben proposed that they should stop pulling, for the double purpose of resting and bailing the boat.

The dusky officer consented, and, springing to their feet, the men glanced toward the receding ship, which was now almost out of sight, and could only be seen at intervals, when it was

lifted upon the crest of a sea. All around, the great seas, rising, falling and clashing, were illumined by a dim, yellowish light, that gave to them an aspect peculiarly weird and dismal. The edges of the waves, when they caught the beams of the moon, seemed girt with numbers of long, sharp-pointed spears, linked together by electric wires; while the incessant hum of the vast ocean sounded like the voices of millions of evil spirits at war with each other, far down in its watery depths.

"I'm afraid there isn't much hope, lads, of our getting aboard that craft again," said old Ben. "We may as well look the fact in the face first as last."

"Ay, ay," cried Frank, "but we must not despair. We may fall in with some other vessel by daylight. In the mean time we will search the boat to see what we can find in the way of provisions."

This was done, and a small bag of sea-biscuits and a breaker containing fresh water, were discovered stowed away in the box at the bow. These, if the crew studied the economy necessary in their situation, would last them for a couple of days.

"Me no see why we no keep up good spirits!" cried little Joe; "there's been sailors much more worse off than we be; adrift in boat with nothing to eat at all."

"Spoken like a man!" cried Ben, patting the dwarf upon his big head; "although I'll warrant you miss the ship worse than any of us, with Miss Lilian a-playin' her guitar. You were fond o' music, little Joe; I used to see it in your eye."

"Yees, yees," muttered Joe sadly, and a sharp pain shot through his heart, at the thought that *she*—his idol worshiped at a distance—had probably passed from his sight forever. He stifled his feelings, however, with a great sigh, and manfully continued his task of bailing out the boat.

CHAPTER V. AN ATTACK.

Soon after, the crew held a consultation as to whether they should continue on their present course, or steer for the bleak shores of Staten Land, now dimly visible astern.

Shivering in their drenched garments, and there being no prospect of their reaching the ship; considering, also, the danger of their being swamped in case they should be overtaken by a heavy gale, while in their leaky boat, they finally concluded to make for the land.

The wind having now hauled round to the north and west, was in their favor; and so, after manfully tugging at the oars until break of day, they found themselves close upon the shores of the little island. The howling seals plunged into the water or crept into little hollows and caverns, as the boat approached; and when its crew landed, not one of the timid creatures was to be seen. Fastening their vessel, they proceeded to build little huts of snow, and, in a short time, a sufficient number were provided to afford each man a tolerably warm and comfortable shelter.

Before entering their snow-houses, however, the mariners indulged for some time in the ex-

ercises of leaping, running, and -swinging their arms, exposing themselves to the wind as much as possible, in order to dry their saturated garments.

At sunrise they partook of their scanty breakfast, consisting of one sea-biscuit apiece, and a draught of water to each man.

The wind had by this time died away; not a ripple disturbed the water as it rose and fell in those long, undulating swells often observed after the subsiding of a heavy gale.

"I shouldn't wonder if we could see our craft now," observed Ben, his whole countenance lighting up. "She can't make any more head-way just at present. If she's in sight now, there's no doubt of our reaching her, if we try."

"Yees, yees!" exclaimed little Joe Plaush, and he clapped his hands and whirled himself round and round upon his heel, after the manner of his countrymen, when joyfully excited. "Oh, yees! and we hear guitar once more, and see Lilian!"

At the mention of this name Frank's eye brightened, and a glow of pleasure reddened his sunburnt cheek. Instinctively, his hand was thrust into the side-pocket of his jacket, and the quick eye of his friend detected the glitter of a little chain.

"Ha! what you got there? Me like to see!" he exclaimed.

"A miniature," answered Frank.

"Who give him to you?"

"Lilian," whispered the young man, and he pressed one of the dwarf's red hands between both his own.

The two men, being now somewhat removed from the rest, who had mounted the top of a high rock to look for the ship, could speak of the young girl without reserve.

"*She* gave me this miniature," continued Frank, "in return for one of my own."

"Ah! me knew it—me knew it would come to this!" murmured the dwarf, with downcast eyes. "Me have seen you many times talking together on the quarter-deck."

His cheek grew pale, while he mechanically shoveled up the snow with one of his great shoes.

"I think you once told me that *you* would never love this girl," pursued Frank; "that you felt friendly toward her, but that—"

"Yees! yees!" interrupted the dwarf, covering his eyes with his hands, "me say so."

"But you did not mean it?"

"You speak to me one night and say this Lilian just such girl as you fancy, an me answer and say *me* would never love him. Me said so because me know him could never like poor Joe Plaush as she could like you. It is all right; me like to see you both happy, that is all me care about."

"But, in reality, you *do* love her, Joe; answer me frankly."

"*Everybody* love her," he answered; "me the same as everybody else."

He looked his chum full in the face as he spoke, and was glad to read satisfaction in his eyes.

"You have removed a heavy load from my mind, Joe," cried the young man. "It would have made me very unhappy to think you loved

a girl who could not return your affection. I am glad it is not so; that you like Lilian simply as a friend."

"A friend—yees, yees—a friend, that is all," murmured the dwarf, outwardly calm, while his heart beat loud and fast.

"Sail 'O!" from the top of the rock.

"Is it our ship?" inquired Frank.

"It is a mere speck," answered Ben Williams, "and half hidden by a fog that's beginning to spread over the sea, but it can't be any other craft than the Monongahela. We can get to it in a few hours, if we take to the boat at once."

"Ay, ay! Man de boat!" yelled the second mate, as he rapidly descended the rugged sides of the rock. "Man boat and quick pull."

The command was promptly obeyed; the men sung and shouted hilariously as they plied their oars, and the light craft flew upon her course.

They had not proceeded far, however, when the dusky officer, bending eagerly forward in the stern-sheets, stated that he could no longer see the sail, as it was now hidden by the fog.

"If we head exactly as we are going," said Ben Williams, "we cannot fail of reachin' the old craft. It is unfortunate, our not having any compass in the boat to take the bearin's of the vessel."

"Ay, ay!" exclaimed Frank, "for the current may drift us a long distance out of the right track."

"Dat so," remarked the mate, "but I t'ink by cruising about a little, we find de ship, for all dat. Any rate, fog never last very long time off Cape Horn."

"You are mistaken there, mate," said Ben, "for in my time I've seen calm weather and a fog in these latitudes for a whole week."

As it is not easy to converse while pulling at a heavy oar, no further remark was made until the boat had been kept upon its course for several hours, when the second mate ordered his crew to stop pulling.

"T'ink we must have got somewhere near where de ship lie, if we not pass her, by dis time," he continued.

The men rose to their feet, and glanced round them, but they were unable to pierce the thick curtain of fog which now covered the sea. Neither could they hear any of the noises usually made on shipboard, and which might have enabled them to guess the locality of the vessel. A silence, interrupted only by the occasional swashing of the tossed boat's gunwale, or the screaming of a solitary sea-bird, governed the vast realm of waters.

"It's sart'inly very strange," remarked old Ben, as the men exchanged anxious glances; "p'r'aps, however, the craft isn't *very* far off, and if we sing out we may make ourselves heard."

Accordingly all hands gave several prolonged and simultaneous shouts; but they listened in vain for a response.

"It's no use," said the mate; "take de oars again, and perhaps we find de ship by pulling about."

"And we're just as likely to get further from her than we are now," said Ben; "hows'ever, I s'pose it's the best that we can do."

The men took their places, and went to work. The boat was steered in many different direc-

tions, but no sign of the ship was seen, and the weary seamen were allowed to rest. Another sea-biscuit and a draught of water were given to each; a scanty dinner after so much hard work.

"No use pulling any more," said the officer of the boat; "only tire out for nothing. Bes', it here until de fog clear. T'ink dat happen before de las' cracker eat up. How many more in de bag?"

"Twelve," answered Ben—"just enough for two meals more. There is water enough for three drinks apiece."

He noticed that the eyes of the New-Zealanders were now turned upon the bag with a fierce, hungry gleam, like that seen in the blazing orbs of half-starved tigers. They smacked their lips and showed their white teeth, in an angry, impatient manner, on seeing him return the provisions to the box under the bow.

Soon after, one of them having whispered to the second mate, the latter ordered Ben to give him the bag.

"Take care of biscuit myself," he continued; "'fraid you take some out of bag at night, when Kanaka no see."

"No!" exclaimed the old tar, his cheeks flushing angrily; "you don't think any thing of the sort; you know very well that I wouldn't be guilty of such a rascally trick as that."

"Bes' give me de bag."

"It is better where it is. It will get wet on your side of the boat."

"No t'ink so; mus' have it."

"Hi! hi!" gritted one of the other islanders, "mus' have it; mus' have some more eat."

"Dat so!" cried the second mate, "we want more eat."

"You can have your share, if you like," answered Ben, "and can either eat it now, or save it for the next two meals."

"Mus' have all!" yelled the three islanders, simultaneously.

"I won't consent to that; it would be unfair," retorted Ben.

"Who officer of dis boat?—you or me?" exclaimed Amoki.

"That makes no sort of difference. Your being the officer doesn't make things right where they are wrong."

"Lis'en!" cried the second mate, throwing himself into an attitude something like that of a public speaker. "Dere twelve biscuit in de bag, and three Kanaka and three white men in de boat. Kanaka hab more big appetite, more big stomachs dan white man; so white man no need so much eat as Kanaka. Berry well; *dat's* why Kanaka *mus'* hab all biscuit in de bag, and white man get along berry well widout."

"Why, blast me, do you call that argument?" exclaimed Ben, springing to his feet. "Ain't you got sense enough to know that though the bigness of our stomachs can't come a touch to yourn, our appetites—"

"No care hear talk," interrupted Amoki, with a savage frown. "Me show you just how t'ings be—*dat's* enough. Now me order you give me bag."

Ben took out six biscuits, and tossed them into the speaker's lap.

"There's what belongs to you three; the rest belongs to Frank, Joe, and myself."

The two islanders at the oars uttered fierce cries and exchanged glances; but a few whispered words from Amoki, as he distributed the biscuit, put a stop to their angry demonstrations, turning their backs to the three white men, they greedily devoured their allowance.

"They is a-plottin' somethin' in them ugly heads of theirs," whispered Ben to Frank. "We must keep a sharp lookout, for we know by experience that they ain't to be trusted."

"Ay, ay," whispered the other, "but luckily we are not outnumbered now as we were aboard the ship."

"If these three in the boat were only the same with which we had the scrimmage," said the old tar, "what a glorious chance this would be to settle our accounts with 'em!"

"Yees, yees," chimed in the dwarf, "and though me not big enough to do much good, me would help as much as me could."

"The three friends were still conversing when the shadows of night stole around them. Seizing an oar, and fastening the boat's lantern to the blade, Ben lighted the wick with a match, ever ready in his capacious pocket.

"Now, then, we'll have some light upon the subject," he said, as he lashed the oar in an upright position.

The lurid gleam streamed down upon the faces of the men, as, glancing upward, about five fathoms ahead of them, they saw the reflection of the boat, and of their own forms, in the fog, magnified to gigantic proportions. Soon the three New-Zealanders, closely wrapped in their great pea-jackets, leaned back against their oars and closed their eyes as if for the purpose of indulging in a nap.

"I feel sleepy myself," said Ben; "but one of us had better remain awake, to keep a kind of a watch of these Kanakas. I'll take the first watch, if you two would like to catch a little nap."

"Me not sleepy at all," said Joe. "If you and Frank like you better go to sleep and let me take the first lookout."

"Very well," replied Ben, "I've no objection."

"And I will take the second watch," said Frank.

This being agreed to, the two seamen leaned back against the bow, and wrapping themselves in their pea-jackets, and some spare pieces of canvas, were soon fast asleep.

Portuguese Joe—restless little dwarf, ever thinking of Lilian and her guitar—seated himself upon the 'midship thwart, with his eyes fixed upon the reclining forms of the Kanakas, who were now snoring in a way which struck him as being a little unnatural. This suspicion added to his vigilance, and now he noticed that the eyelids of the second mate would occasionally lift, revealing the malicious gleam of the orbs beneath.

"Ah!" thought Joe, "me no like to see dis. If this man not asleep, why should he snore?"

As this reflection passed through his mind, he was somewhat startled to observe the hand of one of the Kanakas extended toward the boat's hatchet lying close to the 'midship thwart. Per-

haps, however, this movement was merely caused by restlessness on the part of the sleeper—the consequence of a dream.

"Me make sure, at any rate," muttered Joe, and while pretending to lean over the boat's gunwale to look at something in the water, he watched the stealthy hand with a vigilant gleam from the corners of his eyes. Nearer and nearer, every moment, it crept to the handle of the hatchet, upon which it was finally laid. A minute after, the Kanaka rose to his knees with the weapon uplifted, and directed toward the head of the Portuguese. Before it could be thrown, however, the dwarf snatched up the boat's drag, and whirling it round, hurled it at the dusky traitor, knocking the instrument from his hand. At the same time he shouted to his friends, who, thoroughly aroused, sprung to their feet simultaneously with the three islanders. The one who had held the hatchet now seized it again, and hurled it at the head of the dwarf, who dodged it, however, by a quick movement, causing the sharp edge of the instrument to bury itself in the bow.

In an instant it was in Ben's grasp; and just as the second mate, who had snatched up the boat-hook, was on the point of bringing the ugly weapon down upon his head, he sent the instrument crashing through the brain of the islander.

With a wild scream, the savage fell over the side of the boat into the water, and the next moment Frank Harland seized the throat of one of the others, while Ben grasped that of the third. A struggle of brief duration now ensued. Frank and Ben were powerful men and good wrestlers, so that they soon had their antagonists down, upon their backs, pressed firmly between the thwarts in such a way that they could scarcely move.

"You miserable blueskins!" exclaimed the old sailor, "what could have set you to tryin' your infarnal games upon us? Those few biscuits in the bag, I suppose."

"Not dem only," gasped one of the savages; "jus' as well tell you now as oder time, and you may kill, s'pose you like to. Ain't afraid to die! We goin' to kill you three men because we mad that you no give us bag of biscuit, and because, if kill you, we *have plenty eat*; for no t'ink we find ship for long time."

"Ay, ay," cried Ben, much disgusted. "It's just as I always thought, which is that cannibals will *always* be cannibals when circumstances is favorable. What shall we do with 'em, Frank?"

"We will not hurt the poor wretches, if they will promise to behave themselves in future."

"Berry well, dat!" exclaimed Mokio, the one who was writhing in the young sailor's grasp, "me no trouble again."

The other made a similar promise, and so both were released. In order to guard against treachery, however, the three friends removed the boat-hook and hatchet beyond their reach.

CHAPTER VI.

ONOOLO DISAPPOINTED.

SLOWLY the night wore on. The occupants of the boat saw the shadows fade around them; and finally the rising sun tinted the fog. Soon

after, this began to roll away in little clouds, and broad patches of water and blue sky were disclosed. Suddenly one of the Kanakas uttered a glad shout, and pointed across the larboard bow; and on looking in that direction, the rest were also overjoyed to see the topmasts of a ship looming up through an open space in the misty curtain!

"Ay, ay, it's our own craft, sure enough!" exclaimed Ben. "I can't mistake the cut of that main-topgallant sail."

He was right; for the fog about the vessel rapidly clearing, soon revealed the yellow hull of the Monongahela at the distance of less than a league from the boat.

Old Ben sprung to the steering-oar; the rest took their places upon the thwarts, and the light craft was urged through the water with arrowy speed. As it glided alongside the ship, the sweet face of Lilian appeared at the quarter-rail, and a moment later her hands were clasped in those of Frank Harland.

"Thank God! you are safe!"

"Yes," he replied, "and—"

"Allow me," interrupted the doctor, springing toward him with a pill held between his thumb and forefinger, "allow me to give you this! It will prove a sure preventive of the evils which must result from the hardslips you have suffered."

"No, thank you," answered Frank, laughing. "I have found a better preventive than your pill."

And he looked straight into Lilian's eyes.

"Indeed!" cried the doctor. "I hardly think so. There never yet was anything invented to excel my pills. Had that unfortunate young man, Thomas Collins, the steward, accepted them, as he should have done, I have no doubt they would have cured his fits. But to change the subject, you must have had a rough time in the boat."

"Our situation was not as bad as it might have been; but I am at a loss to account for our being deserted by the ship. Perhaps you can explain the matter."

"It was the captain's order. He is not responsible for his own actions: he is crazy; there can no longer be any doubts upon that point. But, Onoolo was to blame for obeying him. My niece and I begged him to return for the boat after we discovered that he had left it; but he firmly refused to do so, saying that the captain was a wonderful man, a prophet or something to that effect, and that he *must* do everything he ordered. Then we applied to the skipper, but he refused to countermand his order, going on in a wild sort of a way about whirlpools, maelstroms, and God only knows what, and declaring that he couldn't spare time either to return to or wait for the boat. Here comes Onoolo, now," added the doctor, as the mate emerged from the cabin. "He will be glad enough to see the boat and the crew, for, notwithstanding that he did not hesitate to obey the captain's command—owing to his strange superstition with regard to madmen—I have no doubt that the desertion of the boat grieved and worried him very much." In fact, the countenance of the dusky mate, as his glances fell upon the faces of the boat's crew, was lighted up by a gleam of wild joy. This, however, was soon clouded by a shadow of anx-

iety, as he looked in vain for the familiar face of his second officer.

"Hey, dere!" he exclaimed. "Where Amoki?"

"Dead!" promptly replied old Ben, and in a few words he made the necessary explanations.

"No like dis; no like you kill second offi—" cried the mate, with blazing eyes.

"I was obliged to do it in my own defense, as I have already said."

"Hi! hi! but dis no happen, if you give him de bag of sea-biscuit. When officer order you mus' obey; no matter *what* de order is!"

"I differ from you there," answered Ben. "If an officer should tell me to cut off my own head or even his own, do you think I'd do it?"

"Yes. Do whatever officer tell you. He same as *king*."

"That's the way heathens look at the matter, I know, but I'm not a heathen, I hope, having always tried to act like a Christian."

"You no right to kill officer. Mus' punish you for dat. Put you in riggin' and whip you until you almos' dead!"

"No, no!" exclaimed Lilian. "You will not do that, Onoolo. I am sure you will not be so cruel."

"White girl stan' up for white man; islander for islander!" moodily replied the mate. "Me love the second officer all same as brother. We been to sea togedder long time."

"I know that; but you must remember that—"

"No care speak white girl any more!" interrupted the savage. "Bes' go down in cabin wid fadder."

"Not until you promise that you will not flog this old man."

"Really, my friend," said Claret, putting a hand upon the islander's arm, "you will believe me when I state that flogging is a barbarous practice and very deleterious to the general health of the victim. True, one of my pills *might* restore his strength in the course of a day or two, but it could have no effect upon his depressed spirits, upon his outraged feelings, the indulgence of which might eventually lead to consumption."

"Z-z-sh!" gritted the mate through his teeth, "you talk about pill all time; pill dis, and pill dat. No care to hear any more. Mus' flog old Ben!"

"You shall kill me first!" exclaimed the latter. "I was never flogged in my life, and I never *will* be."

"We quick see 'bout dat. Hey, dere, aft, here—de watch!"

And a dozen islanders came to the quarter-deck.

The old tar snatched a handspike; Frank and Portuguese Joe did the same, and stationed themselves by his side.

"We are outnumbered!" screamed Dr. Claret, drawing his daughter through the companion-way, and closing and fastening the slide. "We are outnumbered!"

"Oh, papa, why have you done this?" cried Lilian. "Perhaps we might persuade them not to flog the old sailor; and besides, Frank—"

"We are outnumbered!" interrupted the doctor; "but, I shall maintain my post by your side, and with ready self-possession protect you to the last!"

"They have no intention of harming us!" cried the young girl.

"Let 'em try!" hissed the doctor through his clinched teeth, glaring savagely at the companion-slide, "let 'em try!"

"Do let us go out on the deck!" cried Lilian, her cheek paling as the yells of the islanders broke upon her ears. "Oh, my God, they will kill poor Frank!"

But the doctor, who now trembled like an aspen, prevented her from opening the slide.

"You could do no good," he stammered. "I trust, however, that our friends will escape—injury—if—they are careful! Ahoo! there! keep up a bold front!" he added, in a loud but tremulous voice.

"We must not allow those men to be killed!" pleaded Lilian.

"No, no, we must not allow it!" cried Claret, in a troubled voice, which proclaimed the struggle going on between his benevolence and cowardice, "we must not allow it, and yet—yet—do you see—we are outnumbered!"

"The captain! the captain!" cried Lilian, no longer doubting the true state of her father's feelings. "Strange that I did not think of him before. He will save our friends."

And she darted into the state-room, where she found the skipper seated upon the sofa, indulging one of his usual reveries.

Eagerly and quickly she informed him of the dreadful encounter which was transpiring, or about to transpire, on deck.

"For heaven's sake, try and stop them!" she pleaded; "there will be bloodshed—murder and—"

"Where? What? Have we got there yet?"

"No, no; you do not understand me! There is a disturbance on deck—the white men will be murdered!"

"On deck?"

"Ay, ay!" cried Claret, from the top of the staircase, "to the rescue! We are outnumbered!"

The captain clapped his hand to his brow; glared at the young girl an instant, as if striving to recollect what she had said, and then rushed on deck.

Previous to this the Kanakas had thrown themselves upon the three friends and hurled them upon their backs. The wrists and ankles of Frank and the Portuguese were then fastened with pieces of ratline stuff, while Ben, stripped to the waist, was dragged aft and tied to the mizzen rigging.

At the moment the captain emerged from the companionway, Onoolo, provided with a heavy knotted piece of rope, stood behind the old tar, his arm uplifted to deal the first blow; but before this could be done, the shrill voice of his superior pierced his ear.

"Hist, there. What are you about? Who gave you permission to flog one of my men? Throw away that rope before I tear you limb from limb!"

The rope dropped from the mate's hand; he turned toward the captain with a disappointed but submissive expression of countenance.

"Please, cap'n, dis man *kill* second mate—friend of mine, and make food for fish."

"Poor fool!" replied Wythe, violently stamp-

ing the deck with his iron-heeled shoe. "What matters it? We are all *marked* men—all doomed to be food for the fishes. Release the man at once, and the others also," he added, pointing to Frank and Joe, "and mind you bear a hand about it."

"If cap'n would only please let me flog dis man. Won't feel right unless have revenge."

"Dog of a Kanaka!" yelled the skipper, the lurid light burning in his deep-set eyes, "dare you disobey my orders? Ho! ho! I will make mince-meat out of you; I will cheat the whirlpool of its due!"

"Berry well; let man go if you say so," murmured Onoolo, his head drooping beneath the mad light flashing from those wild orbs; "berry well; let go."

And with a few blows of his sheath-knife he severed the cords that held the old sailor's arms to the shrouds.

"If you had flogged me," exclaimed Ben, his whole frame quivering with rage, "my knife, sooner or later, should have made a hole in your infernal black heart!"

"None of that!" screamed Wythe, shaking his clinched fist in the speaker's face; "none of that, or I'll have you strung up to the yard-arm! Ho! ho! there shall be no quarreling aboard my ship, for she's a doomed craft, and we are all doomed together! A fine time we'll have of it going round and round, and down—down—down!"

"Poor captain!" muttered Ben, to himself, as he turned away. "He is mad, and hardly knows what he says. I won't quarrel with a madman at any rate!"

By this time Frank and Joe also had been released, and Onoolo now motioned to his dusky shipmates to go forward.

They obeyed; and then, glancing aloft at the sails, which were beginning to expand in a light breeze, the captain suddenly grasped his mate by the shoulder.

"Halloa, there! how is this?" he screamed; "why have you taken in so much sail? It won't do; we will never *get there* at this rate! Crack everything on the old craft that she'll bear. D'ye hear?"

"Ay, ay, sir!" replied the mate, and the Monongahela was soon darting upon her course under a cloud of canvas.

"Ho! ho!" shrieked the captain, as he rushed into the companionway, "this is what I like! Away we go, bound for the wild North, with everything out! Away, away, the king of race-horses! Crack it on—crack it on the old ship, and we'll soon *hear it roar!*"

"Mad! mad! there's no hope for him!" muttered Ben, shaking his head. "Come, Frank and little Joe, let us go into the steerage and get something to eat."

They were on the point of doing so when Frank's shoulder was touched, and turning, they beheld Doctor Claret, looking very fierce and formidable, with his woolen night-cap cocked on one side of his head, and the leg of a stool grasped in his left hand.

"Where are they?" he exclaimed, in a loud and threatening voice, "Where are the rascals?"

"Who?"

"The Kanakas—the—the—ahem—the blood-thirsty cannibals! We will show them a bold front!"

"Why, my eyes!" cried Ben, "you are sar'tinly a ferocious customer, doctor; but we haven't any need of your help now seeing as everything is over."

"Is it possible? This is really too bad! Couldn't we—ahem—couldn't we make a dash upon them *now*, and carry everything by storm?"

"There's nothin' to carry," answered the old sailor. "But with all respect to you, doctor, I think you'll find the makin' of pills more to your taste than anything of the fillibustering kind."

"You are mistaken. My blood fairly boils when I see my friends in difficulty; and—and—I feel at such times as if I could accomplish wonders. I am familiar with death; and I may add that I have, on many different occasions, driven the grim fiend away from the threshold of my patients."

He went on to cite a few cases, and while he was thus occupied Frank glided to the side of Lilian, who now appeared upon the quarter-deck.

"I am so glad," said she, "that the mate was not allowed to flog your old shipmate, and that the Kanakas did not hurt you."

"They are a rascally set," muttered Frank. "I wish there were a few more white men in the ship."

"It is better to forget what is past. I don't think you will be molested again. Onoolo always seems ready to obey the captain, and he must perceive by this time that the madman objects to his meddling with the whites."

"Ay, ay; and he is a strange fellow, this captain of ours."

"I sometimes hear him raving in his room at midnight, in a way that fairly frightens me."

"You should not feel alarmed; he is harmless."

"And yet to hear him go on, you would think he meditated sinking the ship."

Frank smiled.

"There is no danger of his doing that."

"But suppose he should take a notion to do so. What could we do to prevent him. Onoolo, backed by his dusky shipmates, would destroy the vessel in a moment if the captain should order him to do it."

"I hardly think he would go so far as that."

Lilian shook her head.

"I *know* he would," she said, in a low voice.

"You *know* it? How?"

"Last night the captain and Onoolo were shut up in the second mate's room, and I could hear what they said whenever they spoke in a loud voice. The captain was going on in his usual wild way about whirlpools, etc., when he suddenly paused, and the next moment I heard him ask Onoolo what he would do in case he (the skipper) should order him to steer the ship against a pile of rocks. The Kanaka answered that he would obey him. Then they said a great deal more that I could not hear, after which I heard Onoolo go on deck. I feel afraid that something dreadful is going to happen—that the captain really intends to destroy the vessel."

"Oh, no," cried Frank, "he will do nothing

of the sort. The ravings of a madman amount to nothing."

"But I have a presentiment."

"So do all of your sex," laughed Frank, "when they feel alarmed."

"What's that about presentiments?" inquired Claret, now advancing. "I hope you do not mean it, Lilian, as these feelings are usually the result of a disordered state of the nerves. Suppose you try one of my pills."

"It would do me no good."

"Very well, then; we'll go down to breakfast, which the cook has just informed me is ready."

So saying, he took her arm and conducted her into the cabin, leaving Frank to follow Ben and Joe who had now passed into the steerage.

CHAPTER VII.

OFF THE BRAZILIAN COAST.

ROUNDING the dangerous cape, a week after the incidents last described, the *Monongahela*, under a cloud of canvas, stood to the north'ard.

Favored by a fair wind, crew and passengers, a month later, inhaled the fragrance wafted from the Brazilian Coast, and saw the delicate flying-fish as it flitted hither and thither with gauzy wing over the crests of the dark-blue waves. Schools of porpoises rolling and tumbling about, or running across the bows of the careering ship, were frequently seen; and occasionally one or two were made to suffer for their temerity; that is to say they were harpooned and dragged on board to be cooked into "balls"—a delicacy much prized by whalers—for breakfast or dinner.

"I am opposed to dis ungen'lemanly way ob serving dese poor creatures," the cook would say, as he stood looking down upon the fish gasping and struggling upon the deck in a pool of its blood—"Mos' decidedly. It am one ob de mos' cruelest and barbarousest fashions in de world to kill dese citizens ob de water!"

"Ay, ay, cook"—from either Ben or Frank—"but I think I've heard you say that you're very fond of killing pigs. It's as cruel to kill them as to kill fishes."

"Dat am a lop-sided view of the question. If you kill a pig, why den every part ob him come in use, so dat you hab some reward for your trouble, but dese porpoises—what's de use ob killing dem jus' for de sake ob cooking dem balls which it am a mighty sight ob trouble for gen'lemen to fix up and cook in de right shape."

"Hi! hi! hi!" from one of the Kanakas, "dis man no got pity for *fish*; quick see dat. No like to *cook*—dat's all!"

And Moonshine would then scratch his head, and with a guilty grin return to his galley to vainly puzzle his brains for some plan that should prevent the catching of porpoises in future. He had taken something of a dislike to Doctor Claret, because that worthy had recommended the balls to the crew as a healthy and palatable dish; and because he had refused to gratify him (the cook) afterward, by contradicting the statement.

The present mild weather often enticed the man of medicine on deck. He would pace the quarter-deck, swinging his arms to and fro, walk up and down the shrouds, or assist the men pulling at the ropes, in order, as he often re-

marked, "to strengthen and invigorate his constitution."

As to Lilian, she never quitted the deck, on these clear sunny days, except to seek her couch or partake of her meals. The breeze, the light, the dark-blue waves, the glancing foam, and the bright-winged fish, inspired her with those pleasant feelings and fancies so agreeable to young womanhood. She read, sewed and embroidered in the open air, gladdening the sight of all hands with her sweet presence; and on moonlight nights she would even sing and play her guitar on deck.

Frank was often by her side. He was an intelligent, manly fellow, and she was nothing of a coquette; so they were not long in coming to an understanding. One night he asked her if she would be his wife, and she answered "yes" without much hesitation; for she had loved him for many weeks.

While they were conversing, however, a dark shadow suddenly fell between them, and turning, they beheld the captain; the mad gleam burning in his eyes and his dark face looking haggard in the light of the moon.

"Hist! ho! ho—this is the hour for lovers, isn't it? The midnight watch and the man at the wheel almost dozing. "Are you sure you love each other? I have been listening to you; I have heard every word you have said. But are you *sure*?"

"Yes," answered Frank, thinking it best to humor him.

"It is a great pity *then*, a great pity—isn't it?"

"Why?"

"Ho! ho! Can you ask? Ain't we all bound for the North? A fine wedding you'll have, going round and round in the roaring, spinning waters—going down—down—down!"

"Dear Frank, what *can* he mean?"

And shuddering, she shrunk closer to her lover's side.

"He raves—that's all; he means nothing!"

"Raves! ho! ho!" shrieked the captain, tossing his arms wildly. "So do the waters rave—the great *whirlpool* raves! I tell you you'll have a fine wedding; and I shall be there, and we shall all be there to see the demons, with their phosphor-lamps lighting you down to their rock-chambers below!"

And with a wild peal of laughter, he disappeared through the companionway.

"His words have impressed me strangely," muttered Lilian. "I feel as if—"

Frank interrupted her with a laugh and a kiss.

"You must not mind what he said."

"I cannot help it."

"You know he is mad."

"Yes."

"Why then should his words affect you?"

"I cannot tell," she replied, turning pale.

"However," she added, with pretended cheerfulness, "perhaps everything will come out right, after all."

"Of course. Here we are with a fair wind, which if it holds, will carry us to New London in less than two months. Then we shall bid adieu to our poor crazy captain, whose ravings alarm you so much."

"Yes; and all this shows that I am very foolish to indulge in my presentiment."

"What? have you a presentiment?"

And he kissed her again.

"I had," she stammered, "but—but it is gone now."

"I think kissing is *good* for your presentiments."

"Oh, I did not mean that!" said Lilian, much confused. "Good-by," and she vanished through the companionway.

Turning and starting forward suddenly, Frank stumbled over a crouching form near the mizzen-mast.

"Another eavesdropper!" he exclaimed.

"Yees!" cried little Joe Plaush, springing to his feet, "but you not mad at me?"

"Why no—my dear chum—no indeed. I did not know it was you, or I would not have spoken so."

"Me stop behind mizzen-mast so as to watch Lilian—beautiful Lilian!"

He clasped both hands and turned his great black eyes full upon the face of his friend.

"All right, Joe, you were not to blame for that."

"You going to marry?"

"Yes."

"Oh, you be so happy!" exclaimed the dwarf, in a wild, eager, but half-plaintive voice. "Me glad you going to be happy. Friend always feel de same for other friend—no?"

Frank pressed the little fellow's hand between his own.

"Certainly; and you shall live with us, when we get settled, as long as you like."

"You much like Joe—no?"

"You know I do."

"You grieve much if me die?"

"Good God! what do you mean?" exclaimed Frank, noticing the strange, wild gleam now flashing out of the great eyes.

The dwarf pressed his head against his friend's side, but did not reply.

"Joe! answer me!"

"Think me die soon; heart very full; 'fraid it burst."

"What makes it so?"

"Think all de time of Lilian—beautiful Lilian!"

"That cannot kill you, my poor chum. How you talk!"

"Joy kill sometime—no?"

"I have heard so; but—pshaw! you are no going to die, little Joe. What put such a strang thought into your head?"

"Heart very full. Joy what make it so full, me think. Me *try* hard to be glad when me hear you ask Lilian to marry, and me think me got glad at last."

"Did you say you *tried* to be glad, Joe?"

"Yees! yees! but no *mean* it; no, no, me no mean it!" he exclaimed, noticing a troubled expression in Frank's eyes. "Me glad without *trying*! And now me will go down into steerage and sleep well, because you going to be happy!"

"So it was all a joke about your dying?"

"Yees! yees!" clapping his hands and forcing a laugh—"all joke, nothing more. He! he! he!"

And he rubbed Frank's arm with his shaggy head.

"Miniature—let me see the miniature Lilian gave you," he suddenly exclaimed, looking up. "Me have never seen."

"Certainly, here it is," replied Frank, producing the locket. "I don't know as there is light enough to—"

"Yees, yees!" interrupted Joe, seizing the miniature and pressing it to his lips. "Me run to the leeward, where moon shine bright; then me can see it plain."

Accordingly the two men moved to the larboard bulwarks, and the Portuguese, clambering to the top of the rail, held up the likeness, and scanned it closely.

Awkward little dwarf! His short, thick fingers trembled, the locket fell into the sea, and before his chum could prevent him, he plunged after it.

The ship was running along at the rate of ten knots; there was no time to lose.

Shouting "man overboard," Frank sprung to the wheel and put it down, while the main-yard was being hauled aback. The larboard boat was soon lowered and manned by six oarsmen, among whom were Frank and Ben Williams. They pulled about in different directions for half an hour, but looked in vain for the dwarf. As they were returning to the ship, however, the black, shaggy head of the Portuguese suddenly rose within a fathom of the boat's bow.

"Dere he is!" shrieked the officer at the steering-oar, and a moment later the dead body of little Joe was pulled into the boat.

His arms, rolled up in his tattered guernsey frock, showed the cause of his death. It was evident that while under water, his wrists had caught in the tangled yarns of the tattered garment, so that he could not extricate them; an accident which must have happened after he had got hold of the miniature, as this was now found between the stiffened fingers of his left hand.

"Faithful to the last—poor little Joe!" cried Ben. "He was a good chum, Frank."

The young man did not answer. Speechless with grief, he sat with the upturned face on his knee, heedless of the officer's command to pull ahead.

The body was carried to the ship and laid upon the carpenter's bench. In the morning it was sewed up in the usual manner, and launched overboard.

"Poor Joe! He will never bring home the piece of pink ribbon craved by his little dark-eyed sister!"

CHAPTER VIII.

CONFINED.

"How long did you say, Frank?"

"In about a week. A month ago we passed the coast of Brazil; so we must now be within six or seven days' sail of New London. We are heading northwest."

Lilian smiled and nestled closer to the side of her lover.

At that moment they heard footsteps behind them, and turning, saw the captain, gliding like an ominous phantom toward the binnacle. Over his face his long black hair fell in tangled masses, while his beard, which had not been

touched by a razor for weeks, hung low and grizzly upon his chest.

"How do you head, there?" he inquired of the Kanaka helmsman.

"Northwest, sir."

"Who told you to head that way?"

"De mate."

"Ho! ho! and the wind from the south and east. Onoolo!"

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Crack everything on the old craft that she can carry; and brace the yards a little to starboard, and let her head *northeast*."

"Ay, ay, sir;" and he gave the required order.

"Now, then, away we go!" shrieked the skipper, as the vessel gathered headway upon her new course. "Away we go! not a rag to be taken in unless I give the order! Steady there at the helm! We are bound for the wild *whirlpool of the North*!"

"Frank, you hear him! you hear what he says?" whispered Lilian, turning pale.

"Yes," and he looked much puzzled. "It is certainly very strange that he should change the ship's course. We will never get to New London, the way we are going now."

"He spoke of a whirlpool. It must be that he intends to sink the ship."

"What is that you say about sinking the ship?" inquired Doctor Claret, suddenly emerging from the companionway. "I am sure there is no danger of that. The weather is not stormy at all."

"The captain, uncle—the captain has changed the ship's course, so that we are now going away from New London instead of going toward it."

"Why, really, you don't say! And you think he will eventually sink the vessel?"

"I should judge so from what he says."

"Well, then, this must certainly be attended to. Captain," he added, springing to the side of that worthy, and touching him upon the arm, "I would inquire why you have changed our course?"

"So that we can hear it roar and see it whirling round and round. So that we can go down into its yawning mouth; down—down—down!"

"Yawning mouth? Why, captain, you don't intend to carry us into the jaws of any sea-monster, do you?—any sperm whale or creature of that kind!"

"Ho! ho! the mouth I speak of is many fathoms deep; and it yawns so wide—so *monstrously* wide, that it can carry this ship and all her crew into its whirling, roaring depths! It will be a glorious ruin, I can tell you; and there will be phosphor-lamps for the bride, and a wedding-dress of foam as white as a winding-sheet!"

"The bride? wedding-dress? I don't understand you."

"Ah, no! *you* cannot understand me! Lilian is to be the bride and Frank the bridegroom; and when we get there the sea-demons shall all come to us, and, shrieking with joy, pull us down into their whirling caldron!"

"Pray, to what do you allude?"

"To the *maelstrom*, the *maelstrom*!" shrieked the skipper, thrusting out his arms with a suddenness that made Claret jump back—"it is to

the maelstrom we are bound; the great whirlpool of the North! And the masts shall crack, and the timbers bend and snap in twain, and the ship with all her cargo and crew and passengers shall go down—down—down to her ruin!"

"Ah!" gasped Claret, turning very pale—"ah!"

"Who shall dare to oppose me?" continued the captain, glaring fiercely around him. "Who shall dare to cheat the whirlpool of its prey? Wretch! shall you attempt it?" he added, shaking his clenched fist in the doctor's face.

"Oh, certainly not—not by any means!" answered Claret, hopping still further back.

"Ay, ay, and so we'll all splice hands and pledge ourselves to the maelstrom—the kingly, hoary maelstrom of the North! Ho, there! steady at the helm! If you go a hair's breadth off your course, I'll brain you!"

He ran to the binnacle and examined the compass; then gibbering and laughing strangely, he rushed to his "den" in the cabin.

Glaning toward the steerage hatch, a moment after, Frank saw his old chum beckoning to him.

"This is mighty strange, lad," said Ben, as the young man came to his side, "the way the captain is managing matters. I don't half like it. We couldn't have a better breeze than we've got for the home'ard course, and here we are a-sidling off to the northeast."

"Ay, ay; but do you suppose the captain really intends to continue on his present course?"

"To tell the truth, lad, I'm afraid he does. He's crazy with a monomania in his head, besides. That monomania, as you've seen, is the 'Milstrom,' which, if we once get into, God help us all."

"We will go to Onoolo and try to persuade him to disobey the captain's order, which he has a perfect right to do, under the present circumstances."

Ben shook his head.

"That wouldn't do any good. The Kanaka looks up to the captain as a sort of God, d'ye see, and wouldn't consent to what you propose. He'd obey the skipper, if he knew it would result in our goin' to Davy Jones's the next minute. There's only one thing we can do, seeing as we are outnumbered by the Kanakas, and so couldn't make 'em obey us, and that is, to take to one of the boats on the sly, and desert the ship."

"That certainly, is the only alternative left us."

"Once in the boat, there'd be no fear of the captain changin' his course to get hold of us again. He's in too much of a hurry, d'ye see, to get to that 'Milstrom' he raves about so much. He wouldn't spare the time to give chase to us."

"I think you are right, and that it is our duty to execute our plan as soon as possible. If we do so, we may reach the American coast and start some vessel in pursuit of this craft, in time to insure her capture."

"Ay, ay, that's a duty which I think I owe to the owners of the vessel. We'll try to get off this very night; as soon as that lynx-eyed Onoolo goes below."

"That generally happens about this time."

"Ay, ay, and you'd better go to Lilian now, and tell her what we are going to do, and also to make what preparations she can."

"All right; I will also let Doctor Claret into the secret."

"Sartainly; but I hope he won't insist to carry them big trunks of his with him; for before we could get them into the boat, we'd be discovered."

"I think I can persuade him to leave them."

"All right, lad. While you are a-preparin' the passengers, I'll contrive to slip enough crackers and meat into the boat, with other things we'll need. The bow boat, remember."

"Ay, ay;" and rising, Frank sauntered with feigned carelessness to the quarter-deck, and communicated the plan to Claret and his daughter.

The latter approved of it, and immediately descended into the cabin to make her preparations; but Claret did not like the idea of leaving his trunks behind.

"They are filled with valuable books and medicines," said he, "and it would grieve me to death to part with them. However, as there is no other alternative, I will leave the trunks, after taking out my skeleton's head and a few books. I prize that head very much."

"All right. Get your things ready as soon—"

"What were you going to say?" queried the doctor.

"Hist!" whispered the young man. "Onoolo has just passed behind us."

"Ah!" and Claret winked with both eyes.

"Steady dere!" shouted the mate to the man at the wheel; "no let swing quarter of a point off her course."

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"I going into steerage to get somet'ing eat, and smoke pipe," continued the mate; "mind you keep ship straight while I gone!"

And turning upon his heel, he walked to the after hatchway, through which he disappeared a moment later.

"Now is our time," whispered Ben, suddenly gliding between Frank and the doctor. "I've got the provisions in the boat, and have been waiting for just such an opportunity as this. The men forward are all lying asleep around the fore hatch."

"But the man at the wheel," said Frank, "he will see us."

"Not in time to prevent our getting clear of the ship. In fact, he may not see us at all, as the galley will partly hide us from his view."

"All right, then. Hurry up, if you please, doctor."

"Ahem—you will not have to wait long for me," answered Claret, as he dove into the cabin.

He soon returned with the valuable head, together with a few books and some articles belonging to Lilian, among which was the guitar.

"Hey, dere! What dis mean?" cried the dusky helmsman. "What you goin' to do wid all dem t'ings?"

"He's going to put 'em in the bow boat," promptly answered Ben, "so as to dry them, for they've been wetted by the spillin' of some water in the cabin."

This explanation satisfied the Kanaka at once; and, fixing his glance upon the compass, he took no more notice of the movements of the little party until the sudden creaking of the boat-falls broke upon his ear. Then, peering forward,

he caught a glimpse of Lillian in the boat, as the latter was being lowered.

"Hey, dere!" he screamed, in a voice that was heard in every part of the ship. "De boat! de boat! Keehowrie (white people) going to leave de ship!"

With a loud splash the boat struck the water, and Frank and Ben, active as squirrels, jumped into it a second afterward. Doctor Claret, however, was not quite so nimble. Having got astraddle of the rail, it struck him that the tossed boat was too far beneath him to be reached with safety.

"For God's sake, make haste!" shouted the two seamen, who stood at each end of the little vessel, ready to unhook the falls the moment the doctor should enter it. "Make haste! jump! jump!"

"Ahem—really—I am afraid, my friends, that I could not do that without breaking my legs."

"No, no! there is no fear of that!"

"Come, papa, *do* come!" pleaded Lillian.

"I will try!" answered Claret, in a deep, sepulchral voice; "I will try."

And catching a firm grasp of the rail, he leaned over sideways, and for a moment peered into the boat. Then he drew himself back, then peered into the boat again, then drew back a second time, and finally, with a determined shout, tucked up his brown coat-tails, as if resolved to make the attempt at all hazards.

"Hey, dere! Come back here!" shrieked Onoolo behind him; and he was unceremoniously pulled to the deck, while a dozen Kanakas proceeded to hoist up the boat.

"Balked!" cried Ben, impatiently dashing his cap to the bottom of the little craft; "balked! and all on account of the doctor!"

The boat being by this time on a level with the rail, the two seamen sprung out and assisted Lillian to the deck.

"Belay, dere," ordered the mate, "and keep watch of dese four people while I go in cabin and ask captain what we do with 'em."

Accordingly, the Kanakas, forming a circle around the whites, stood ready to resist any attempt on their part to escape.

"I am really sorry that I am the cause of our being captured," said Claret, "and sincerely wish you had gone off without me."

"We must make the best of it," sighed Ben; "but you'd never make a sailor, doctor."

"I think I should, in time. I certainly should have jumped; in fact, I had resolved to jump when the islander seized me. Ahem!—that was really too bad."

While the four were still conversing, the mate reappeared, provided with handcuffs.

"Capen say han'cuff all," he exclaimed, "and put in de run!"

"Not Lillian!" cried Frank, his eyes flashing.

"You are not to—"

"Hi! hi!" interrupted the mate. "Capen say white girl and all. Make fast, and put in run."

"My eyes!" cried Ben, fiercely; "that's what I call barbarousness. Neither Frank nor I will stand by and see the poor gal served in that way!"

"Can't help; dem orders."

And, obeying a significant motion on the part

of their dusky officer, the Kanakas seized the three white men and held them, while the former put the handcuffs on their wrists. Lillian's were confined in the same manner, after which the four were conducted aft and thrust into the run. The hatch was then fastened above them, and they found themselves in total darkness.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SQUALL.

"FINE times—fine times in dis ship!" soliloquized Moonshine, the next morning, as he hung over his steaming coppers in the galley. "S'pose dey all thought I was asleep las' night, while dat rumpus was a-goin' on; but dey made a gran' mistake. How am it possible for gen'leman born and brought up like dis chile to sleep wid such a rumpus going on? Miss Lily, Ben, Frank, and dat old frog ob a doctor, all in de run, and de ship going ahead like mad, bound for dat place dey call de Milstrom. Phew! all dis 'nuff to set a gen'leman crazy! Mus' contrive somehow to set dem prisoners free and get us all in de boat. Poor Miss Lily! come hard on dat gal to live in dat run on three biscuit and on one cup of water each day. Mus' watch for chance to get her out ob dere, though I's puzzled to know when dat will come. Know where de keys ob de han'cuffs is kept, at any rate; *dey* hang up in de mate's room. Wish it come on to blow, so as dey all go alof; den I have chance to get keys and set dem pris'ners free. Blow! blow! hallelujah! blow gale of wind, for dat will be our salvation!"

And at frequent intervals during the day, Moonshine would go to the weather-rail, and peer eagerly to windward, watching in vain for the signs of the coveted gale.

On the next day, and the next, and so on for a week, his watch was continued with the same result; but on the eighth day, just after six bells in the afternoon, a sudden squall pounced upon the ship, throwing her upon her beam-ends, tearing her lighter canvas into shreds, and driving her through the roaring, seething waters with the speed of a thunderbolt. The three topsails, breaking loose from their sheets, "slatted" wildly about, with a noise like the discharge of a platoon of musketry, while the tall masts, snapping and quivering, seemed on the point of going by the board. Mingling with the roar of the gale in the rigging, and the hissing and booming of the vast ocean, a strange humming noise was heard, as if invisible swarms of locusts were passing overhead. There was not a cloud in the sky, but a dim revolving pillar of haze hung over the sun, like a veil, and gave to it the aspect of a great ball of red-hot iron suspended aloft.

Upon this lurid ball, the wild eyes of the Kanaka mate were turned with foreboding gleam as he shrieked forth his orders to all hands who had been summoned to take in sail.

Suddenly a crash was heard, as the three stripped studdingsail booms, simultaneously snapping in twain, fell from aloft, striking the deck before they went down into the roaring vortex beyond the submerged bulwarks.

"Lively, lively dere!" yelled the mate, as his dusky crew clung to the almost perpendicular

yards, unable to grasp the slatting canvas. "Quick, pick up sail!"

And he darted up the main rigging to assist and encourage the men.

"Now, den, is de time to free dem pris'ners," muttered Moonshine, as he stealthily emerged from his galley. "Dat nigger is gone aloft, and de capen is in his room wid de door locked. I know dat because I heard him a-talkin' to hisself when I went in de cabin, half hour ago, to carry de biscuit. I'se de steward and cook too, since Tom Collins been los', and dat is berry good for de subjec' in hand—de freein' ob dem pris'ners."

Descending into the state-room, and applying his ear to the door of the captain's apartment, he heard the madman talking and laughing, as he was in the habit of doing when alone in his room.

"Hope he'll keep dat up until I get through wid my bizness," muttered the cook, as he glided toward the room in which the keys of the handcuffs were kept.

He found them, as he had expected, hanging from a nail in the wainscot, and taking them down, he made his way to the hatch, and pulling aside the crowbar with which it was fastened, pulled it open.

"Who's that?" inquired Frank.

Without answering, however, the cook leaped among the little party.

"Moonshine!" exclaimed Ben Williams, "what has brought you here?"

"I's come as de savior ob dis obnoxious party!" cried Moonshine, throwing himself into a theatrical posture. "De promptin's of benev'lence has brought me to dis den ob infamy."

"Be careful, cook, how you talk," cried Ben. "What kind of a way is that to—"

"Oh, never mind," interrupted Claret. "He means well enough. Ahem—his knowledge of the dictionary is limited, that is all."

"I's got de keys ob de han'cuffs," continued Moonshine, "and dere mus' be no delay. De ship's in a squall jis now, but it won't last more dan ten minutes—I's certain on dat point. "Dere," he continued, as a sudden jerking of the vessel was felt, "she righted now. We can lower de boat easy enuff now, and as dem whaleboats can live in amos' any kind of a blow—"

"That'll do," interrupted Ben. "Go to work at once if you're going to, and unlock our handcuffs—Miss Lilian's first."

"Sart'n; all gen'lemen wait on de ladies first," and quickly stooping, he freed the young girl's wrists. The others being liberated in like manner, the party cautiously emerged into the state-room.

"And now dis being obliterated," said the cook, "I will go on deck to make a 'reconsistence' (reconnaissance) ob matters."

He did so, and was gratified to discover that the violence of the squall had abated, and that the mate, with his crew, were still aloft, occupied in repairing damages.

"All right," he whispered, thrusting his head through the companionway; "de coast is clear."

"Av, av; now then for a rush," said Ben.

And followed by his companions, he made his way to the deck, and thence to the bow boat.

Into this Lilian and the doctor were assisted with all possible dispatch, after which the little vessel was lowered.

The creaking of the falls was heard by the man at the wheel, and by the dusky crew aloft. The former shrieked out an alarm, while the latter commenced to descend the shrouds. The next moment, however, the boat being manned by the whole party, was rapidly dropping astern.

"We are safe now," cried Lilian, clapping her hands, as the seamen grasped their oars.

"Ay, ay," cried Frank, "that is if they don't give chase to us."

"They won't do that," cried Ben; "the crazy captain won't allow 'em to do that. He's determined not to lose any time."

How far are we from the coast?" Lilian inquired, turning to Frank.

"About a thousand miles, I should judge."

"Less than that," said Ben; "and it's more'n likely that we'll be picked up before we reach it by some coaster, or other craft. I don't look upon us as bein' hard up at all, seein' as the weather is warm, and we've got plenty of biscuits in the boat."

"Oh, yes; I dare say we shall get along very well," said Lilian.

"But don't you feel tired and weak-like after bein' so long in the run?"

"A little, but I shall soon get over it," she added, meeting the anxious glance of her lover. "As soon as we get out of sight of the ship I shall go to sleep."

Frank stopped pulling, and taking off his jacket, made a tolerably comfortable bed for her in the stern-sheets with the garment and some spare rolls of canvas.

She seemed much pleased with her couch, and looked very grateful.

"You had better take one of my pills, Lilian," said Claret, producing his box, "it will soothe your nerves."

She smiled, and in order to gratify him, accepted the pill.

The next moment he sprang to his feet.

"Ahem, friends, they are lowering a boat to give chase to us, and we shall certainly be overtaken."

The three seamen looked toward the ship, and saw the starboard boat alongside manned by his crew, who were shrieking and yelling like wild animals. A minute afterward, however, they were seen to return to the deck, after which the boat was hoisted up.

"Ay, ay," cried Ben, exultantly, "that's the captain's work. "Onoclo lowered to give chase to us, and the skipper found it out, and made him h'ist the boat again. I knew he wouldn't waste any time even to give chase to us. You can feel perfectly easy now, Miss Lilian, and go to sleep if you like."

"You are sure we are not to be chased?"

"Yes; there can be no mistake upon that p'int now."

And so, reclining upon the couch Frank had prepared for her, Lilian dropped into a sweet and refreshing slumber.

The day had passed, and the midnight moon hung low in the heavens, when she awoke. The boat-sail had been rigged, and the light craft, heading about north by west, was bounding

along through the blue waves, with the silvery spray flying about her bows. Claret and old Ben were extended across the thwarts fast asleep, Frank was steering, and Moonshine in the bow was keeping a lookout.

"I am glad you slept so well," said the young man.

"Yes, I must have slept a long time," she replied. "Is the ship out of sight yet?"

"She was hull-down at sunset; she must be out of sight by this time."

"I am glad of that. There is no other sail in sight, I suppose?"

"Not yet; but I have no doubt we will see one in a day or two, as we are on the right track. Wouldn't you like something to eat?"

"I feel too happy to eat. I am so glad we have got away from that ugly ship."

"You have reason to be. She must now be a long distance from us, as the last we saw of her, she was bowling along upon her northeast course, under a perfect cloud of canvas. A new set of studding-sails and topsails had been rigged."

"Do you think we will get to the coast in time to insure her capture?"

"I doubt it; she is a fast sailer, and her crazy captain won't turn aside from his course for a moment, unless compelled to do so by a change of wind."

The lovers continued to converse an hour longer, when Frank, being relieved by Ben, stretched himself across the thwarts, to get a nap.

A few hours afterward he was waked by the cry of "Sail, 'O!" and starting up and rubbing his eyes, he saw a small brig faintly visible in the light of dawn, about three points off the weather bow, and about a league distant, heading on the same course as that pursued by the boat.

Being signaled she hove to, and our party were soon on board. They were treated with great kindness by the captain, who gave up his own apartment to Claret and his daughter. His vessel, he informed them, was a West India trader, now on her homeward passage to New York, which he thought she would reach in about six days.

He was right. The brig dropped her anchor in New York Harbor on the sixth day after the party were picked up.

Dr. Claret then repaired with Lilian to the house of his sister in Forty-fifth street, with whom he remained until an estate, owned by him, and located in the upper part of the city, was made ready for his reception.

He did not object to the frequent visits of Frank Harland to his daughter, and when, at length, the two were made man and wife, there was not a happier member of the bridal party than Dr. Claret. The young man having, shortly after his return from sea, entered into partnership with an elder brother doing a thriving business in Front street, was now in good circumstances. He purchased a comfortable estate near the Bloomingdale Road, where he still resides with his beautiful and accomplished wife.

About a year after their marriage, they were pleased by a visit from Ben Williams. The old

sailor, shortly after his arrival in New York, in the brig which had picked up the party, had set out for New London, which he reached in time to ship in a steamer chartered by the owners of the "Monongahela," to go in search of their vessel. The steamer set sail on a clear morning, and with a fair wind soon cleared the harbor. Two days out, however, a heavy gale from the southwest came howling and whistling over the ocean, causing the crew to close reef the topsails and furl the jibs. The great seas, tumbling and roaring over the bulwarks, swept the decks fore and aft with such violence that the men were finally obliged to batten down the hatches to prevent the water from getting into the hold.

The foremast hands were soon forced to seek the quarter-deck in order to escape the drenching seas which, rising higher and higher every moment, would have swept them overboard had they remained in the forward part of the vessel.

"Bad weather, lads," remarked old Ben, turning to his shipmates. "I hope it'll clear off directly, for we're a-losing time by it."

"Ay, ay," replied Tom White, a young sailor with remarkably broad shoulders and coal-black hair. "It's bad weather, and is going to last for several days, in my opinion."

He had scarcely spoken when a tremendous sea came crashing and booming over the weather quarter-rail, fairly burying the vessel in its watery folds.

Every man of the watch was lifted from his feet and carried to leeward, and all would have been swept overboard had they not grasped the mizzen ratlines. Some of the latter, however, gave way at once, and two of them were hurled, shrieking and screaming, into eternity. The rest swung themselves to the deck, shaking the water from their pea-jackets like Newfoundland dogs.

"This is too bad!" exclaimed Tom White, mournfully. "Oh God! yes, it is too bad! My chum, Jack Warren, is one of those who is lost. Poor Jack!" And the tears rose to his eyes.

"Never mind, lad; cheer up!" cried old Ben. "We must all die sooner or later; and while I pity them that's gone, I can't help thinkin' that they'll all go aloft, as they've always done their duty like men."

"Ay, ay, and God bless 'em!" muttered Tom, as he wiped his eyes, "but this is the third chum I've lost since I began to go to sea."

The storm raged for three days, at the end of which the gale subsided to a moderate but fair wind; and in the course of a month the topsails were reefed for the intended cruise.

The vessel cruised a long time off the coast of Norway in the neighborhood of the Loffoden Islands, but no signs of the whaleship could be found until one day, when an old Norwegian fisherman came aboard, bringing with him an old yellowish piece of timber which he had drawn up while pulling in his lines. On one side of this stained and broken piece of wood, four letters yet remained, so dimmed and discolored by long submersion, however, as scarcely to be distinguished by the naked eye. The four letters—HELA—with the timber on which they were traced, were all that could ever be discovered of the ill-fated MONONGAHELA!

THE END.

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